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THE UTE INDIANS AND THE PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM: A HISTORICAL ANALYSIS, 1900-1985

by

Kim M. Gruenwald

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree
of
MASTER OF SCIENCE
in
History

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Kim M. Gruenwald

PREFACE

This thesis is a historical case study using the Ute Indian tribe of eastern Utah to examine how federal Indian education policy is implemented at the local level. It is important to examine education because it has been a central meeting ground between Indian and non-Indian cultures over the past two centuries. Historically examining how the government has tried to educate the Indian nations reveals its attitude toward the Indian nations, and the Indian nations' response to these efforts reveal much about their view of the mainstream society.

Historically, an education policy buttressed every plan the United States government has used to administer Indian affairs. In early treaties, the government promised to provide schooling for Indian youngsters as part of being responsible for the well-being of the Indian nations. During the middle years of the nineteenth century, when the government began moving Indians to reservations to clear the land for white settlement, education was an important element in teaching the Indians about Euro-American culture. Boarding schools became an important element in the federal government's policies in the late nineteenth century in an attempt to separate children from their homes in order to acculturate them to the values of the dominant society. And in the twentieth century, the federal government waged an all-out campaign to enroll Indians in public schools.

The history of federal Indian education policy in the public school arena is easy to document and outline. The federal government sought to use public schools as agents of assimilation in the early 1900s; in the 1930s, the government advocated enrollment in public schools so children did not have to be torn from their homes; in the 1950s, the schools were agents of assimilation again.

During the 1960s and 1970s a crucial transition occurred in federal policy in regard to public schools. The federal government began listening to the Indians rather than talking at them. Government officials began to allow the Indians to speak for themselves on educational issues rather than dictating what the government thought was right. Indian groups fought for reform, a federal Office of Indian Education was formed, and Indian activists demanded that the government give Indians the right to learn about their own culture in public schools rather than being forced to accept the dominant society's values. In the 1970s self-determination was the watchword.

Self-determination meant that Indians were given the right to oversee the implementation of federal funding for programs designed especially for Indian children. Indian parents were to participate in the education of their children through parent advisory committees. These committees had an advisory role, however, not an administrative one. Local school districts staffed almost exclusively by non-Indians continued to control the purse strings.

But historically, how successful were federal policies at the local level? The federal government has always advocated acculturation, if not out-right assimilation, but how do people respond to these policies? Do local communities want their schools to be used to bring Indians into the mainstream society? And when policy dictated that Indians must assimilate, did the Indians fall in line? The question of self-determination is especially important. Have the Indians actually managed to determine how their children will be educated in the public schools?

I have chosen the Uintah and Ouray Utes of eastern Utah as a case study to suggest answers to some of these questions about how federal education policy is implemented in local school systems. The Utes attend public schools in Uintah and Duchesne counties. What will become evident is that while federal policy shifts every decade or so, local attitudes change much more slowly. Local attitudes toward Indians can counteract federal policy easily, mainly by keeping Indians separate from the rest of society as much as possible. And in the historical case of the Utes, the Indians favor this separation as much as the local non-Indians residents do.

Chapter I will examine the federal government's initial efforts to enroll Indians in public schools. Whites fought it tooth and nail until the 1930s and 1940s when federal funding made Indian enrollment attractive to them. Chapter II will examine the effects of public schooling under the termination policy of the 1950s and early 1960s when the federal government began a massive drive to completely assimilate Indians. During this time, the Ute Indian students attended schools that were openly hostile to their culture. Chapter III will examine how federal policies of self-determination have worked in Uintah and Duchesne counties. The results of this policy are often at odds with its name. By examining the above educational issues, much about the interaction between whites and Indians in the Uintah Basin will become clear. The dynamics of such interactions are not revealed if the history of education policy is studied only at the federal level.

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ABSTRACT

The Ute Indians and the Public School System: A Historical Analysis, 1900-1985

by

Kim M. Gruenwald, Master of Science
Utah State University, 1989

Major Professor: Clyde A. Milner II
Department: History

This thesis is a historical case study of the Ute Indians of eastern Utah. The purpose of this thesis is to examine how federal Indian education policy is implemented at the local level. Ute children attend school in the Uintah and Duchesne county school districts.

The thesis traces Ute experiences in public schools during crucial transitions in federal policy. From 1900 to 1930, the federal government sought to enroll Indians in public schools in order to teach them white ways. Indian enrollment increased in the 1940s and 1950s when federal funding made the attendance of Ute children lucrative to the school districts. After the reservation boarding school closed in 1952, nearly all of the Ute children attended public schools and faced a school system that was

hostile to their culture.

A key transition occurred in the 1970s when federal policy shifted to one of self-determination. The Indian Education Act of 1972 made mandatory the direct participation by Indian parents in the implementation of federally funded programs. Many parents failed to grasp the new opportunity. The Ute Tribal Education Division became heavily involved in running Ute history and language classes in the public schools under Title IV of the Indian Education Act of 1972 and under Title VII of the 1965 Elementary and Secondary Education Act.

Despite the existence of a policy that advocated self determination, Utes were not really allowed to determine how federal money was spent. The 1972 Indian Education Act established an advisory role for parents rather than an administrative one. Local school districts still controlled the purse strings. Programs run under this act were not integrated into the core curriculum of local schools.

Federal Indian education policy changed from decade to decade but local attitudes remained essentially the same, blunting each policy's effectiveness. When the federal government desired assimilation, local residents and Indians fought that goal. When the federal government switched to a policy of self-determination, misunderstanding and outright hostility kept it from

fulfillment at the local level. In addition to problems associated with local attitudes, federal legislation also proved unworkable because it gave Indians no real power to make the school districts listen to them.

(222 pages)

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CHAPTER I

THE TRANSITION FROM RESERVATION BOARDING SCHOOL TO LOCAL PUBLIC SCHOOLS--1900-1952

Ute entry into the Uinta Basin public school systems in the early twentieth century was but one more step that followed many other efforts whose goal was to assimilate the Utes or get them out of the way if they would not cooperate. From the 1860s to the 1880s, the government wanted to physically remove Indians from the path of encroaching white settlement. Like many other tribes across the United States, the Utes stood in the way of progress as defined by the mainstream, dominant culture. It would not be until the 1890s that the federal government began to propose public education as an agent of assimilation. Under the initial reservation policy, the government sought to keep whites and Indians apart for the protection of both.

The first survey party sent to the Uinta Basin in 1861 by Brigham Young reported that the land was "measurably valueless except for nomadic purposes, hunting grounds for Indians and to hold the world together. . . ."[1] But in 1892 local residents hailed the Basin as Utah's "finest acres," and the people called for the opening of the Ute Indian reservation to white settlement.[2] This change in attitude was prompted by the discovery of mineral wealth in the Uinta Basin.

Prior to this discovery, the Uinta Basin seemed like an excellent, out-of-the-way place for the Utes to live. In 1865 the Indians had been relocated from the Wasatch Front to the Basin because they caused trouble for Mormon settlers. When the settlers arrived in the Great Salt Lake Valley in 1847, Mormons and Utes competed for food. As the Indians were displaced, they began to raid farms and settlements. In 1860, the Utah government petitioned Washington to put the Indians away permanently on a reservation. The Indians had no higher opinion of the Uinta Basin than the non-Indians did, and they resisted, but they were forced to move during the late 1860s.[3]

In the 1880s Utah residents decided they wanted the Uinta Basin back when an important mineral, gilsonite, was discovered there. Manufacturers used gilsonite to make varnish, paint, and casting. Few deposits existed in the United States. Money could be made developing the rocky land. In the early 1890s, the Vernal Express began singing the Basin's praises and calling for non-Indian settlement. On more than one occasion, the local newspaper compared the number of acres in the Basin to the number of acres in Maryland, Rhode Island, and Delaware, stating that the Basin could have the same type of industrial and agricultural economy. "Thousands of happy homes" awaited settlers in the Basin.[4]

As with the previous generation of Utah residents, one thing stood in the way of white settlement--Ute Indians. The Vernal Express reported that "the Uintah reservation is the richest piece of country in natural resources of any part of Utah but those resources must lie dormant because intelligent white people are not allowed to develop them."[5] The paper castigated the federal government's reservation policy, stating that the Utes used the land as a sporting ground or park. According to the newspaper, the Indians were lazy, would not farm, and lived on government rations. It seemed ridiculous for them to have so much land when they only used a fraction of it. Non-Indians claimed allowing whites to take the reservation lands and farm them would set a good example for the Utes, teaching them to change their ways.[6]

Non-Indians in the Uinta Basin criticized the reservation policy because they felt that the Indians should not receive special treatment from the government. The Vernal Express claimed that Indians should have the same rights as whites--the right to 160 acres of land.[7] Fortunately for non-Indian land developers, the federal government had a policy that had been developed to help whites achieve such goals. The Dawes Allotment Act of 1887 provided for the parcelling of plots of land to individual Indians and allowing non-Indians to acquire the balance of a reservation. Some allotment took place in the Basin in the late 1890s, but the main land rush of white farmers occurred in 1905.

In the early 1900s, the Basin was made more accessible for settlement. A railway company was formed in 1903, and public roads were built in 1905. Settlers were then lured in through questionable promises about rich land and plentiful water. But when 15,000 expectant pioneers arrived, most were disappointed with what they found. Many left soon after arrival--at least one by using a bullet through his head when he saw what kind of land he had sold his profitable Colorado ranch to obtain.[8]

The Indians did not sit passively by and watch their reservation be divided up by the federal government. The Utes opposed non-Indian settlement, stating that eventually the whites would own all the land and kick the Indians out. But the Indian Bureau's representative and "chief troubleshooter," James McLaughlin, told the Utes, "This is for your best interests. If your consent is not obtained, the land will be allotted nevertheless."[9] He told the Utes they had to submit because the white settlers had the authority of the national government behind them. In 1906, 700 Utes left the reservation and traveled to the Sioux reservation in South Dakota to discuss possible joint action. In 1908 the army escorted them back to Utah.[10]

The policies and beliefs behind the Dawes Allotment Act allowed for more than just physically breaking up the reservations. The federal government also wanted to break up the Indians' tribal way of life. Federal policy makers' plans to achieve this goal were influenced by reform groups, the most important of which was the so-called Friends of the Indian. The Friends of the Indian consisted of a group of religious leaders, educators, and politicians who were dedicated to keeping white men from exterminating the Indians by assimilating them and teaching them to accept the dominant culture instead. The Friends lobbied most actively in the 1880s and 1890s, when they held annual conferences at the Lake Mohonk resort in New York.

The Friends of the Indian, and hence the federal government, believed that education played a central role in an assimilationist program. Two education policies were implemented. The first was the establishment of a federally prescribed course of study for boarding schools, which was intended to closely parallel public school courses in order to teach Indian children white ways.[11]

By the turn of the century, an example of this type of boarding school education could be found on the Uintah and Ouray reservation. An agency school existed between 1876 and 1878, but the Indian service took over the responsibility for schooling in 1882. The Whiterocks Boarding School was constructed in 1892. Diseases such as measles periodically swept through the school, attendance was low, and parents did not want to send their children there, saying that "their children always died when they went to school."[12] Conditions at the boarding school improved after 1910, and attendance increased.[13]

The second Indian education policy formulated by the federal government focused on shifting Indian children from federal government schools to state public schools.[14] By 1900, government officials and educators seriously questioned the merits of boarding school education. The Friends of the Indian and other reformers felt that Indians would learn white ways better in public schools. This policy worked especially well in concert with the Dawes Allotment Act. Allotment was designed to teach Indians about individual land owning and to increase agricultural opportunities for both Indians and non-Indians. When white settlers arrived, the federal government expected them to set up school districts. If Indian children intermingled with white children in the schools, their parents might become part of the white community by joining local government and educational organizations. The federal government expected that tribalism would then disintegrate and public school education would help Indians appreciate "better ways" of life.[15]

The federal government knew that white prejudice would hamper its attempt to assimilate the Indians, but the Indian Bureau also believed that "association" would override prejudice. Leaders in Washington, D. C., felt that if the conditions of life for Indians were improved, whites would accept the Indians more readily, and school enrollment would increase.[16] In 1906, the Commissioner of Indian Affairs reported that

> [i]n many neighborhoods the whites object to the Indian pupils on the ground of their dirty habits, their diseases, and their morals. If the Indians were generally clean, healthy, and morally decent according to the white social code, and contributed their share toward the support of the schools by taxation or special tuition fees, the objections of the whites would be largely overcome.[17]

While local agencies helped Indians improve their living conditions, the federal government planned to ease prejudice by paying tuition for Indian students in public schools because Indian land was non-taxable and raised no money for local school districts. Around the turn of the century, many Indian children attended public schools without any compensation from the federal government. But the federal government felt that by entering into tuition contracts with school districts, the schools could be induced to seek Indian enrollment more actively. The Indian Bureau planned to pay tuition for Indian children based on the amount of money it took to educate a white child. In 1907 there were only 123 Indians attending public schools under contract in the whole country, but that number swelled to 2500 by 1918. Public school officials supported the payment of tuition, claiming their white patrons in rural districts were nearly as poor as the Indians, making the burden of providing school for non-taxpaying Indians even greater than expected.[18] This argument had some validity in Utah's Uintah and Duchesne counties where, due to depressed economic conditions, public schools were poorly supported. They even had to close a month early in 1921 because of the lack of funds.[19]

In addition to the goal of assimilation, the federal government also expected Indian enrollment in public schools to fulfill federal economic goals. The Indian Bureau found that providing tuition money for public schools was cheaper than providing year-round clothing and room and board in boarding schools. The government tried to save even more money by telling superintendents to make sure that only Indians who were not citizens of a state or who did not pay any taxes received tuition benefits. The government also hoped that increased education and the adoption of white values would make the Indians self-sufficient so that aid could eventually be withdrawn completely. The federal government's ultimate economic goal was an increase of the states' responsibilities to Indians and a decrease of federal involvement.[20]

The federal government's drive to reduce the number of government schools needed for Indian children succeeded. In 1914, more Indians were enrolled in public schools than in Indian Bureau schools for the first time. That year, the Indian Appropriation Act budgeted $20,000 for tuition. The number of Indians in public schools reached 10,000 (although only a quarter of them were under tuition contracts) in 1918.[21] The Bureau of Indian Affairs insisted that this success was more than just a numerical victory. The 1916 Annual Report stated:

> In the past there has been some opposition on the part of the patrons of white schools to the presence of the Indian, but this feeling is gradually disappearing, and in nearly all of the states and public school districts there is a willingness to cooperate with this office.[22]

Although federal government officials emphasized the school districts' "willingness to cooperate," the Ute experience in Utah's Uintah and Duchesne counties tells a different story. The first mention of federal contracts with Utah school districts occurred in 1909. However, for public schools serving the Uintah-Ouray Reservation, no contracts appeared until 1913. Between 1912 and 1930, the number of Ute children eligible for school enrollment fluctuated between 237 and 309. Only seven children attended boarding schools off the reservation in 1912, but the number was thirty in 1914; and despite a fall to under twenty during the first half of the 1920s, it kept climbing until it reached over fifty in 1928 and 1929. The reservation boarding school at Whiterocks had the steadiest enrollment climb, beginning with seventy in 1912 and reaching over one hundred by the end of the 1920s. Public school enrollment fluctuated wildly. From twenty-one in 1912, it grew to thirty-five in 1914, slowly dropped again to fifteen by 1917, reached a high point of eighty in 1926, fell to fifty-six in 1929, but rose to seventy-four in 1930. The number of children not enrolled in any school was 160 in 1912, dropping to ninety-one in 1914, rising again to 152 in 1917 before falling fast to a low point of zero in 1926, and then rising again to fifty-eight and forty-nine in 1929 and 1930. The year 1926, when all Utes were enrolled in some type of school, was also the year in which public school enrollment reached its high of eighty. The steady rise in the enrollment at the reservation boarding school put a tremendous strain on the facilities. Each type of enrollment figure often rose by ten one year or dropped by twenty the next. For example, the number of children not enrolled in any school dropped from 146 to eighty-six between 1917 and 1918 and rose from seven to fifty-eight between 1928 and 1929. Clearly the education of the Uintah-Ouray Utes was not a smooth-running, stable process.[23]

In 1910, the superintendent of the Uintah and Ouray reservation did not want the Indian children in public schools. He felt the kind of education they needed was industrial training and vocational training in farming and ranching at the Whiterocks Boarding School. Ute students did not formally graduate from the Whiterocks Boarding School, they were just expected to leave and begin agricultural work. The superintendent made no effort to cultivate ties between public school and boarding school officials.[24]

The boarding school and the public schools theoretically taught the same thing. The state-prescribed course of study for Indian students in boarding schools was designed to teach Indians to be citizens just as public schools did. But the boarding school pupils were taught at a slower pace. Bob Chapoose, a Ute student who attended the boarding school in the late 1930s and early 1940s, switched twice between boarding school and the public schools; each time he returned to the boarding school, the teachers there had to advance him an extra grade.[25]

Chapoose recalled that boarding school administrators ran it like a military institution. The Indian children answered roll call every morning and walked in formation to breakfast. At the cafeteria, the children waited until everyone was served to begin eating. The Ute students were responsible for keeping the grounds picked up. In class the children learned about the mainstream culture. Children caught speaking their native tongue received harsh discipline.[26]

The Uintah and Ouray superintendents' reports indicate that most of the boarding school students' education consisted of the boys caring for the school facilities and the livestock, and the girls cooking, cleaning, laundering, and sewing. In 1914, one superintendent reported that the Indians were "not sufficiently advanced in civilization

. . . [to] appreciate schools . . . ."[27]

The next superintendent, Albert H. Kneale, held his office from 1915 to 1925. He felt that the Indian children could benefit from association with whites in the classroom.[28] In 1921 he optimistically stated:

> If I can put these Indian children into the public schools among the white boys and girls and let them pull each others hair, swap jack knives, play marbles, fight and learn that 25 cents is a quarter of a dollar, by the end of six years I can abolish the Indian agency altogether, for the Indian population will be gradually assimilated in the affairs of the communities and the Indians will be able to take care of themselves.[29]

Kneale strived to forge closer ties with public schools officials and noted the hiring of a new county superintendent of schools who protested less against Indian pupils than his predecessor had.[30]

But if this superintendent of the Uintah and Ouray reservation approved of the mingling of the races, he and his colleagues also reported that local whites had other ideas. Basin residents objected to Indians because they were not neat and clean. Whites commonly believed that the Utes did not want to progress--Utes were supposedly content to live in filth and squalor with their blankets, war paint, and long hair. Gambling was "bred in the bone" among Utes, and they engaged in common law marriages.[31]

Local objection to Ute marriage practices has proved to be one of the white's strongest and longest-lasting complaints about the Indians. It surfaces in written reports from the 1950s and verbal conversations in the 1980s. In the early 1900s, non-Indians said that Ute girls were "given" in marriage when they were twelve to fourteen years old, taken from school, and forced to take care of a home and family. Their children were undersized and deformed, and the girls were turned into fat squaws. From the white perspective, this was wrong. Many felt that the Indians did not try hard enough to make marriages work. Wives left at the least sign of trouble, and when they left, the husbands stopped working. Apparently, marriage vows were not "sacred" to the Indians. The superintendent of the reservation felt that the Indians were fairly moral, but there would be "many long years of constant work on the part of all concerned" needed before they would make "satisfactory citizens."[32]

Non-Indians also tended to divide the Indians into "good"/"bad" categories. Good Indians farmed instead of attending the Sun Dance, and the reservation superintendent hoped that boarding school "graduates" would become a "force" in the community--they supposedly dressed better, were cleaner, worked harder on their allotments, and had more possessions. Many believed that Ute children could succeed only if they could overcome two things: 1) their own inertia, and 2) the communistic instincts of the Ute way of life. According to the whites, just when an Indian began to make good, his kinsmen and friends would insist on benefitting from his rise in fortune. Utes seemed incapable of acquiring what the Indians called a "white man's heart."[33]

The Indians' poor health concerned many whites. Problems with whooping cough, measles, scarlet fever, and trachoma ran rampant at the crowded boarding school in addition to the small-pox outbreaks on the reservation. Many Indian parents felt they sent their children to their graves by enrolling them in boarding schools.[34] Whites feared for the health of their own children from exposure to Indian children.

The non-Indian inhabitants of the Uintah Basin did agree with Superintendent Kneale on one point--the Indians had to be "changed." According to Kneale, when whites did not ignore the Indians' existence, they viewed the Utes as a "menace." Many felt the Indians sat around, wasted their resources, and produced nothing. To keep the Indians from menacing future generations, the "protecting hand of the federal government" (the reservation system that allowed Indians to live without working) had to be removed. The superintendent tried to tell local residents that "the education of an Indian consists almost wholly of a creation of a sense of values and there is no place where they can so quickly and so surely acquire this sense as in the Public School."[35]

But many whites were unwilling to accept Kneale's plans. Superintendent Kneale reported that school officials did not openly oppose Indian enrollment, but "there was revolt on the part of teachers and white patrons."[36] When one teacher refused to allow Indian students into her classroom, the county superintendent backed her up. White parents at another school turned away children, saying that they had trachoma although the Agency physician gave them a clean bill of health.[37] Local citizens felt the Indians had no rights and could be "trampled upon with absolute impunity."[38]

Not surprisingly, the Indians did not want the races to mingle, either. Kneale cited an example of the Indians' attitude in 1917. That summer, the superintendent reported, the reservation had its first successful agricultural fair for Indians. In the past when non-Indians were in charge, most Indians did not attend. But in 1917 when Indians completely managed the exhibits and games, nearly all the Utes attended, and, according to Kneale, the Indians enjoyed and benefited from it.[39] The Ute Indians actively resisted events planned for them by whites, but were interested in events that could improve their lives if Utes ran it.

Utes revealed their feelings towards mingling with Basin residents in the area of education as well. Some Ute parents refused to send their children to school. But in the late 1920s, the reservation superintendent withdrew rations from Indian families if they did not make their children attend regularly. Before public schools strictly enforced attendance, one reservation superintendent reported that Utes living close to public schools enrolled them there, then did not send them, knowing no one would come looking for the children. He felt objection toward whites and Indians attending the same schools was strong on both sides.[40]

Despite poor race relations, the number of Utes in Uinta Basin public schools increased in the 1930s. In 1932 the Uintah Ouray Agency announced that in 1933 tuition would be paid according to actual daily attendance rather than in lump sums to the districts. As federal government restrictions on tuition payments tightened and the Johnson-O'Malley legislation went into effect, enrollments increased.[41]

The Johnson-O'Malley Act was part of Indian Commissioner John Collier's "Indian New Deal." It provided funds to public school districts to help them meet special Indian "needs" through contracts between the state and the federal governments. Unlike much of the New Deal for Indians, the Johnson-O'Malley Act represented an affirmation of previous government public school policy rather than a shift. Collier's innovative educational plans, which attempted to allow Indians to maintain cultural integrity in education situations, took place at the federal government-run schools rather than at public schools.[42] But Collier did not support the old plan to enroll Indian children in public schools so they would assimilate. Instead, he wanted them to be able to live at home rather than at boarding schools. In the 1930s at Uintah and Ouray, most of the Johnson-O'Malley funds were used to provide lunch for Indian students.

By 1935 over 100 Ute children attended public schools, and the number stayed over 100 until the 1950s. In 1934 the superintendent gave credit for this jump to the fact that public school officials were more interested in Indian students after the criteria for receiving tuition funds were strengthened.[43]

But new government restrictions also caused confusion and soured relationships between the local school districts and the federal government. An act passed on February 17, 1933, required districts to submit an application in triplicate through their local reservation superintendent. The application was due on June 30, and the cost of educating the Indians was not to include any money for improving buildings. If applications were delayed, funds might be exhausted before all received a share. In 1932, under the previous system, contracts were actually approved for school districts in southern Utah, but were then cancelled due to lack of funds. This problem continued after the passage of the 1933 act. The rapid fluctuations in Ute enrollment also meant that a school official could submit one estimate in June and be surprised with 30 more students in his district in September. Some years districts in the Uinta Basin found they could not provide lunch on the amount of money they received, and the federal government answered by withdrawing support.[44]

One of the most wide-spread complaints against the federal government's plan in the Uinta Basin was that it only provided tuition for Indian students. But many white lessees on Indian land sent their children to school without paying taxes as well. Johnson-O'Malley funding did not provide for these children because they were not Indians, even though they lived on Indian-owned, nontaxed land.[45]

The payment of tuition money was a very sore point with the non-Indian residents of the Uinta Basin. In 1934, during the depths of the Depression, 58% of the whites depended on relief. Many blamed some of this on the fact that Indian land could not be taxed for the good of the county. The Depression kept whites from paying taxes, which meant that little money was available for schooling children of any race. School buildings were run down, and there was no money to hire qualified teachers. The whites also resented the Indian boarding school. They perceived it as a better building with better-paid teachers, and felt public schools got the leftovers. In contrast to non-Indian complaints about the lack of support given to public schools, a 1937 report done by a Denver agency revealed that the federal government had spent $103,195.00 on Uintah/Duchesne schools alone between 1927 and 1937, in addition to welfare payments to other programs.[46]

During the Depression, white attitudes toward educating Indians and whites together in public schools did not improve. Many of the old trends begun prior to the 1920s continued. In many cases Indian children in poor health were still sent to boarding school. One public school had all its Indian children transferred to the boarding school because of the crowded conditions of the public school, and because the whites objected to the Indian students. The Duchesne County School District refused to allow Ute children to attend unless the Bureau of Indian Affairs agreed to enforce attendance.[47]

More personal attacks occurred as well. The reservation superintendent received complaints that bus drivers passed up Indian students at assigned stops, or did not wait for them if the children were running to catch the bus. Bus drivers and white children riding the buses denied these reports. One bus driver wrote that he could not keep whites and Indians from quarrelling. White students taunted and jeered the Ute children, telling them they had no right to ride the bus because they paid no taxes. The superintendent thought this could be alleviated by making a public announcement in the schools telling the children that the federal government paid for the Indian children. Nonetheless four Indian students refused to ride the bus and demanded that the district provide another way for them to attend school.[48]

Many teachers demonstrated an open prejudice that did not make the Indian children feel welcome. A Depression-era non-Indian student in the Uinta Basin gave the following example:

> I remember one of the hymns we were required to sing in the school. It was from an old Protestant hymnal . . . . It went:
>
> Let the Indian and the Negro,
> Let the rude barbarian hear,
> Of the glories of the kingdom . . .
>
> These lyrics did not wash with the Indian students. When they would not sing those words, the teacher would become incensed.[49]

A shift in attitudes toward allowing Indian students to attend public schools occurred in the early 1940s. The residents of the Basin began talking about building a consolidated public high school for the students in Uintah and Duchesne Counties. The public schools at that time were small, scattered, isolated, and run down. A new school with more facilities in a central location would serve the Basin's children better. The Boards of Education helped the state complete a survey of the Basin's educational needs in 1941 for the purpose of applying to the state and federal government for funds. Non-Indians wanted the federal government to provide one-third of the money necessary for construction through the Indian Bureau because the school would benefit the Uintah and Ouray reservation.[50]

The state did a very complete survey of the students' needs. It included data on such subjects as occupational opportunities in the Basin, the age of marriage of most young people, transportation needs, and the condition of current schools. But the most interesting chapter is the one on the needs of the Indians. The only information specific to the Utes was the number of Ute children in various schools. Information on the educational needs of the Utes was confined to directly quoting over ten pages of a federal report on the needs of "the Indian" in the United States. The school district report also stated that Ute Indians in the Sherman Institute and California boarding schools could attend the new school. Basin residents had never shown an interest in these boarding school Indian students before, but when the government began awarding funds on an average daily attendance basis, non-Indians went out of their way to add more Ute children to the roster of available students.[51]

The conclusions of the report assured government officials that the Indians would benefit from "an enlarged curriculum adapted to Indian culture."[52] Such curriculum had not arrived by 1955. According to one master's thesis, the Ute children that year were enrolled only in typing, seminary, history, English, and other regular classes along with the white students. Teachers were unprepared to cope with the problems Ute children encountered in a school system that was advanced far beyond what these students had experienced in the boarding school.[53] The schools made available some material on Indian education, and some teachers requested it. Workshops and special counseling programs existed set up, but according to reports on the Utes' experiences in the schools, attitudes toward Utes and their abilities did not change.[54]

The federal government and the school districts haggled for the next decade over who would pay for what in the construction of the new high school. The districts argued that 80% of their land was non-taxable, but the federal government said too few Indian students would benefit from the school. Over 3000 non-Indian children attended school in the counties, compared with approximately 300 Indian students. The Indian Bureau complained that other federal agencies would have to deal with the government-owned-land problem, but the districts kept applying to the Indian Bureau for the funds. In 1947 all parties concerned (except the Utes) finally came to an agreement. The Indian Bureau contributed $250,000; the counties contributed $150,000 each; and the new school was to "be available to all Indian children of the districts on the same terms as other children, without payment of

Federal tuition."[55] However, with the passage of Federal Impact legislation in 1952 and 1954, the school districts once again received funds to compensate them for the financial predicament of government-owned, non-taxed land.

In the 1940s the boarding school needed major renovations or it would have to shut down. Perhaps because of the advent of the termination era, explained in the next chapter, the federal government, the reservation superintendent, and the boarding school principal decided to close the boarding school. All Indian students were transferred to public schools. The process began in 1947 with the elimination of the ninth grade; the eighth grade closed in 1948, and the seventh grade in 1949. Ute public school enrollment jumped from 128 to 404 in the three years prior to 1950.[56]

By 1952, the reservation boarding school had closed completely, and the federal government attained its goal of enrolling nearly all the Ute children of the Uinta Basin in the state's public school system. But the achievement of this goal did not cause the Indians to enter the dominant culture as the federal government thought they would. Indians did not assimilate for two reasons--first, they resisted; and second, local non-Indians resisted. The Indians wanted to retain their culture, and although Uinta Basin whites wanted the Utes to change, non-Indians wanted to have nothing to do with the process of change. Indian enrollment in public schools took on a limited attraction in the 1940s and 1950s when the local whites needed federal money to build a new school, but attitudes toward the Utes did not change in any significant way.

Notes

[1] Quoted in, Coulsen Wright and Geneva Wright, "Indian-White Relations in the Uinta Basin," Utah Humanities Quarterly, 2 (October 1948), 322-23. When referring to the Basin or the mountains, the spelling is "Uinta." However, for political designations such as the school district or the reservation, it is "Uintah."

[2] Vernal Express, August 25, 1892.

[3] Floyd A. O'Neil and Gregory C. Thompson, "A Short History of the Unita Basin, Utah" (American West Center, University of Utah, 1975), 11-13. Copy available at the Utah Historical Society, Salt Lake City, Utah.

[4] Ibid., 19-22.

[5] Vernal Express, August 25, 1892.

[6] Ibid.; December 22, 1892; February 22, 1894.

[7] Vernal Express, December 8, 1892.

[8] O'Neil and Thompson, "A Short History," 11-13; Wright and Wright, "Indian-White Relations," 331-32, 339.

[9] Wright and Wright, "Indian-White Relations," 334

[10] Ibid.; Floyd A. O'Neil, "An Anguished Odyssey: The Flight of the Utes, 1906-1908," Utah Historical Quarterly, 36 (Fall 1968), 321.

[11] Irving G. Hendrick, "The Federal Campaign for the Admission of Indian Children into Public Schools, 1890-1934," American Indian Culture and Research Journal, 5 (Number 3, 1981), 16-17.

[12] Quoted in Fred A. Conetah, A History of the Northern Ute People, edited by Kathryn L. McKay and Floyd A. O'Neil (Ft. Duchesne, UT, 1982), 131.

13Ibid., 130-31

[14] Hendrick, "The Federal Campaign," 16-17.

[15] Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1906 (Washington, D. C.,1906), 41-42; Annual Report (1914), 8-9. Hereafter these reports will be cited as Annual Report followed by the appropriate year.

[16] Annual Report (1910), 15; (1911), 27.

[17] Annual Report (1906), 41.

[18] Annual Report (1908), 47; (1907), 37; (1918), 27; (1913), 24; Hendrick, "The Federal Campaign for the Admission of Indian Children," 19.

[19] Vernal Express, April 21, 1921; Wright and Wright, "Indian-White Relations," 340-41.

[20] Annual Report (1929), 6; (1918), 28; (1915), 4; (1913), 25; (1914), 7, 8.

[21] Annual Report (1914), 7; (1918), 27.

[22] Annual Report, (1916), 24.

[23] Annual Report, (1909), 20; (1913), 160; (1912-1930).

[24] Superintendent's Report, Uintah and Ouray Agency, 1910; and Ibid., 1911, in, Superintendents Annual Narrative and Statistical Reports From Field Jurisdictions of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, 1907-1938, Uintah and Ouray, National Archives, Record Group 75, rolls 158, 159; microfilm copy available at Uintah County Library, Vernal, Utah (hereafter cited as UCL). Hereafter these reports will be cited as Superintendent's Report, followed by the appropriate year, and Record Group will be cited as RG.

[25] Superintendent's Report, 1921, UCL; Bob Chapoose, oral interview, 1988. See Appendix A.

[26] Bob Chapoose, oral interview.

[27] Superintendent's Report, 1914; 1912, UCL.

[28] Superintendent's Report, 1921, UCL.

[29] Salt Lake Telegram, February 24, 1921.

[30] Superintendent's Report, 1921, UCL.

[31] Superintendent's Report, 1929; 1915; 1910; 1914, UCL.

[32] Superintendent's Report, 1912; 1929; 1911, UCL.

[33] Superintendent's Report, 1921, UCL.

[34] Superintendent's Report, 1913, 1922, UCL.

[35] Superintendent's Report, 1921; 1913; 1922, UCL; Superintendent of the Uintah and Ouray Agency to Earl Thompson, April 19, 1920, in "Uintah and Ouray Agency Miscellaneous Correspondence, 1897-1912, 1916-1952 (hereafter cited as UOA Misc. Corr.), National Archives, Denver Branch, RG 75, BIA, box 19 (hereafter cited as NADB, followed by the appropriate box number).

[36] Superintendent of the Uintah and Ouray Agency to Earl Thompson, April 19, 1920, UOA Misc. Corr., NADB, box 19.

[37] Superintendent of the Uintah and Ouray Agency to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, May 1, 1920, UOA Misc. Corr., NADB, box 19.

[38] Superintendent's Report, 1911, UCL.

[39] Superintendent's Report, 1911; 1917, UCL.

[40] Superintendent's Report, 1928; 1920; 1911, UCL.

[41] Superintendent's Report, 1932, UCL.

[42] Hendrick, "The Federal Campaign for the Admission of Indian Children," 29; Donald K. Sharpes, "Federal Education for the American Indian," Journal of American Indian Education, 19 (October 1979), 20.

[43] Superintendent's Report, 1934, UCL; Wm. B. Showalter to David Gourley, April 19, 1941, UOA Misc. Corr., NADB, box 19.

[44] Office of Indian Affairs, Regulations, Public School Tuition, 1934, UOA Misc. Corr., NADB, box 4; Paul L. Fickinger to C. C. Wright, September 25, 1937, UOA Misc. Corr., NADB, box 19; Reservation Principal to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, July 8, 1937, UOA Misc. Corr., NADB, box 21; Rhoades to Farrow, March 19, 1932 and John S. R. Hammitt to Farrow, December 29, 1931, UOA Misc. Corr., NADB, box 4.

[45] Roy Adams to Samuel H. Thompson, June 4, 1935, UOA Misc. Corr., NADB, box 18.

[46] Superintendent's Report, 1935, UCL; Wright and Wright, "Indian-White Relations," 338, 340-41; H. M. Tidwell to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, November 25, 1930, UOA Misc. Corr., NADB, box 19.

[47] L. W. Page to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs,

October 12, 1933 and John Collier to Grace Lambert, January 6, 1934, UOA Misc. Corr., NADB, box 19; Paul L. Fickinger to Roy Adams, November 30, 1938 and Samuel H. Thompson to Supt. C. C. Wright, August 9, 1939, UOA Misc. Corr., NADB, box 20; Roy Adams to Lewis W. Page, August 27, 1935, UOA Misc. Corr., NADB, box 18.

[48] A. Alwyn Call to C. C. Wright, March 17, 1937; C. C. Wright to C. C. Call, February 20, 1937; C. C. Wright to Charles Glines, September 24, 1940; Charles Glines to C. C. Wright, September 23, 1940. All these letters are in UOA Misc. Corr., NADB, box 21.

[49] Floyd A. O'Neil, "The Indian New Deal: An Overview," in Indian Self-Rule: First Hand Accounts of Indian-White Relations from Roosevelt to Reagan, ed. by Kenneth R. Philp (Salt Lake City, 1986), 43.

[50] Committee of the State Department of Public Instruction, "A Survey of Duchesne County School District and Uintah County School District, 1941," UOA Misc. Corr., NADB, box 17.

[51] Ibid., 96-117.

[52] Ibid., 204.

[53] Darrell D. Atkinson, "Educational Adjustment of Ute Indians as Compared to the Mixed-Bloods, and Native Whites at Union High School, Roosevelt, Utah" (master's thesis, Utah State Agricultural College, 1955); Gottfried Otto Lang, "The Ute Development Program: A Study in Culture Change in an Underdeveloped Area within the United States" (doctoral dissertation, Cornell University, 1954), 338.

[54] Resolution of the Uintah and Ouray Tribal Business Committee, June 6, 1951, UOA Misc. Corr., NADB, boxes 10 and 17; Roy Adams to Hildegard Thompson, October 27, 1952 and Roy Adams to Rex Curry, November 26, 1951, UOA Misc. Corr., NADB, box 18; Wm. B. Showalter to Bertha Ellinger, June 30, 1941, UOA Misc. Corr., NADB, box 19.

[55] "A Survey of Duschesne County School District," 31-42, UOA Misc. Corr., NADB; D. S. Myer to Area Directors and Reservation Superintendents, October 19, 1950, UOA Misc. Corr., NADB, box 21. Willard W. Beatty to Forrest R. Stone, May 23, 1947; Forrest R. Stone to John S. Beyden, February 26, 1947; Forrest R. Stone to Ernest L. Wilkinson, April 3, 1946; all the above are located in UOA Misc. Corr., NADB, box 18.

[56] A. Alwyn Call to Roy Adams, December 14, 1951 and

Harold M. Lundell to Roy Adams, March 6, 1952, UOA Misc. Corr., NADB, box 10; Roy Adams to Ralph M. Gelvin, April 8, 1952, UOA Misc. Corr., NADB, box 19; Forrest R. Stone to Ralph M. Gelvin, March 26, 1951 and Charles B. Emery to Walter V. Woehkle, February 26, 1951, UOA Misc. Corr., NADB, box 21.

CHAPTER II

TAUGHT AS A HOMOGENEOUS WHOLE--1952-1972

Although the Uintah and Ouray reservation had not felt its effects, Indian education prior to World War II had undergone massive changes under Indian Commissioner John Collier. Collier wanted to help Indians preserve their traditional cultures. His education programs aimed at furthering this goal rather than continuing the older emphasis on assimilation. But after World War II, the federal government began a new policy that fit much better with the attitude of non-Indians in the Uinta Basin--termination. Under Indian Commissioner Dillon S. Myer, the federal government planned to eliminate its traditional responsibilities for the education and welfare of the Indian tribes. Myer wanted Indians to move to cities, where they could learn to make their way in the mainstream economy without the federal government's help. As historian Francis Paul Prucha recognized, "...the ideal of educating to preserve Indian community patterns, which had been so strongly promoted under the New Deal, gave way now to an emphasis on preparation to succeed in the white man's world."[1]

When the reservation boarding school closed in 1952, as befitted termination policy, the Uinta Basin school districts found themselves with over 250 new students. The school system immediately showed signs of strain. Already crowded buildings became more so. New rooms and more teachers were needed to relieve the overload. Yet even veteran teachers had little experience in dealing with Indian children. The districts asked the federal government for new calculations of the amount of aid they were to receive, but the federal government told them to submit a report and "we will see what we can do." The schools experienced serious shortages in their budgets.[2]

The Indians had difficulty with the changes brought about by the closing of the boarding school as well. In 1951 the superintendent of the reservation, Forrest R. Stone, sent out fifty letters telling the Indians about the "abrupt change." Destitute Indian parents who had previously counted on the boarding school to provide room, board, and clothing for their children were suddenly confronted with paying for all of that themselves. The Whiterocks Boarding School officially closed on May 23, 1952.[3]

To compound the shock of the closing of their boarding school, the Ute Indians had to cope with another "abrupt change" in the early 1950s--sudden wealth. Prior to the 1950s, many of the Ute Indians were destitute. Although in the 1940s the average family size was over six members, most Utes lived in two-room frame houses or log cabins.

Some still lived in tepees. They had some access to health care, but many did not take advantage of it because the one health center was located too far from many Ute homes which were scattered across the reservation along dirt roads. According to social worker Paul Sanchez, who worked for the Uintah and Ouray Agency, most of the Ute tribe lived apart from the technologically advancing mainstream culture until the 1950s.[4]

In the early fifties, two economic factors catapulted the Utes into the consumer-oriented, modern world. First, in the 1940s, oil was discovered on the reservation, and by 1951, the income from leases was substantial. Second, in 1951, the Utes won a suit against the federal government which gave them a $32,000,000 settlement. This judicial decision awarded between $17,000,000 and $18,000,000 (sources do not agree) to the Uintah and Ouray Utes, with the balance going to the Southern Utes in Colorado. The tribe used the judgment fund to pay debts they owed to the government, to start recreation and housing programs, and for per capita payments. These per capita payments amounted to over $4,000 per Ute between 1951 and 1954. A family of four received over $16,000 in seemingly unearned income during this period.[5]

In a way, this money helped the Utes adjust to the new educational situation in the Basin because they had money to ease the transition to the support of their children on a year-round basis. But the sudden windfall made other adjustments more difficult. The Utes went on a spending spree. New refrigerators and electric washing machines appeared on porches of homes with no electricity. Two or three new cars appeared next to two-room "shacks." Alcohol related problems skyrocketed in 1954, when it became legal to sell liquor to Utes. Actually the problems began earlier, as new cars allowed the Utes to cross the Colorado state line for liquor. The Utes suddenly had to cope with the modern world they had remained isolated from since the early 1900s. New sources of income and the transfer to public schools dramatically changed their lives.[6]

During this period, relations between Indians and non-Indians did not improve. While the non-Indian community was glad to have the Indians spend their money copiously at Basin businesses, they were bitter over the fact that the tribe received indirectly earned income from the federal government. To local residents, money from a law suit did not constitute honorably acquired earnings, even though it compensated Indians for land they had unfairly lost in Colorado in the late nineteenth century. Whites continued to think of the Indians as people willing to live on a government dole without trying to improve their lives.[7]

Despite these assumptions by non-Indians, the Utes did want to use the judgement-fund money to increase their standard of living. Ute leaders felt an important part of this effort was better schooling. They advocated the shift from boarding-school education to public-school education.[8] But while the leaders may have felt this way, apparently many parents and students did not.

After the boarding school shut down, enforcing Ute attendance proved to be the largest problem the public schools encountered. The officials reasoned that Indian parents did not make their children go to school because they did not value education. One program undertaken to combat this issue was a weekly radio show designed to "improve" the Utes' awareness of public news and social problems. In one installment in 1953, the speaker told the Utes that they allowed bitterness against the whites to handicap them. Education would equip their children to get jobs, and they should look to the future rather than the past. Parents should try to speak at least some English in their homes so children would be better equipped when they got to school. Another speaker told the Ute parents,

> Many of us can think back and recall pleasant memories of our friends and of the things we did in school that assures us that our care-free [sic] school days were among the happiest of our lives. Why don't you parents decide now that you are going to do your best to help your children make the coming year the happiest and best one of their lives.[9]

But despite the urgings of the public school officials, Ute children failed at the new Union High School in Roosevelt. They received mostly Ds and Fs in their classes, with an occasional A in elective courses. One survey of twenty Ute, twenty mixed-blood, and twenty white students, randomly selected, found that full-bloods in 1955 had received five As, ten Bs, seventeen Cs, twenty-one Ds, and fifty-five Fs. Mixed-blood Utes received sixteen As, twenty-four Bs, thirty-four Cs, twenty-two Ds, and eighteen Fs. Whites received twenty-eight As, fifty-four Bs, twenty Cs, seven Ds, and one F.

In the 1951 senior class at Union High, only three of twelve Indian students were eligible for graduation, and one of those still had to remove an incomplete grade. That same year, thirty-one of forty-seven Indian students were failing. The principal reported that the Ute students refused to take part in gym classes, refused to bring their materials to home economics, and sat idly in core classes. A list compiled of comments teachers made about Ute students revealed that according to the teachers, one-third of the students failed due to absenteeism, many refused to try or would not participate, some started school too late and could not catch up, some would not study, and at least one was "just plain lazy." Out of comments on 68 students, not one encouraging or positive statement was recorded.[10]

The Ute children failed because they were hopelessly unprepared for the school work demanded of them. The boarding school had focused on vocational education, and as noted above, its academic program did not function on par with the public school system.

In regard to Ute girls, teenage pregnancy became a special school "problem." Numerous reports were sent of girls expelled because they were "quite deeply involved in immoral practices." School officials did not want girls of bad "moral character" influencing others.[11] Part of this trouble lay in the differing attitudes whites and Indians had toward sex. According to one scholar who did field work among the tribe, Utes became sexually active at an earlier age than the non-Indians in the Basin.[12] Many of the Indians who dropped out or were expelled soon got married. Negative judgments of Ute sexual mores had a history dating back well before the 1920s, when whites expressed disgust over Indian common law marriages.

Many Ute students dropped out of high school, but others felt unwelcome at the elementary level. In an oral interview conducted in 1988, Gloria Thompson, a Ute teacher at West Jr. High, recalled her days in the public schools in the late 1950s. She said the teachers wanted the Ute children to be seen and not heard. In a rigid, formal environment, the teachers pulled the Ute students' hair if the children crossed them. Thompson remembered school texts that portrayed Indians as savages and as red men, which damaged her self-image. She also stated that little or no communication existed between the schools and the Ute parents. The Ute parents were so used to the boarding school handling all aspects of their children's lives, that the sudden responsibility of having their children home all year proved to be a shock. They were not accustomed to dealing with public school administrators and teachers.[13]

Gloria Thompson stated that all these factors combined to make her feel outside of the school system, as if she did not belong and could not be a part of it. She grew up with negative images of education. But Thompson said that this alienation helped her in some ways because when she became an adult, she knew that she had to play an active part in Ute education or it would not improve. According to her, those parents now active on committees are from her generation and their activism stems from similar experiences.[14] But it is also true that parents like Gloria Thompson are a minority in the Basin. What made some angry enough to fight made many others feel they could not have any impact on public school education in Uintah and Duchesne counties.

Thus, from the Indian point of view, Ute students failed in the 1950s because the schools did not welcome them or try to meet their needs. But the non-Indian residents of the Basin felt that the primary reason the Indians failed was because they did not want to succeed. They theorized that because the Indians' nomadic ancestors had lived in squalor, the present-day Utes wanted to live poorly too. The whites associated hunger and poverty with the hunting and gathering economy that the Utes had before contact with European-Americans. If the Indians did not want to farm, it meant they did not want to improve their lives; the Utes were content to have their old economy destroyed without replacing it with a "better" one.[15]

The Utes' "faulty" attitudes showed up in other areas as well. Darrell Atkinson, a master's student, who talked with educators at Union High, theorized that teachers' prejudice against Utes came from the Ute children's resentment of them. One teacher said that the Utes spent all their time complaining about things that early Basin residents had done to them. The teacher did not appear to realize that she spoke about grievances that were only fifty years old. Fifteen year old students were raised by parents and grandparents who had experienced prejudice and land confiscation in the Uinta Basin.[16]

Whereas local residents felt Utes were lazy, many teachers felt Indian students were undependable. Atkinson did acknowledge that most Indian students failed because they were unprepared scholastically for the high school and because they did not know enough English.[17] But another scholar, anthropological field worker Gottfried Lang, added boredom with the curriculum to the list.[18]

After talking to "people associated with the Utes" at Union High School, Atkinson found that the Utes did not care about education. On the other hand, Lang spoke with the Ute parents themselves. He found that their children's education was very important to them. Some felt that their children could succeed if they understood their social and physical environment in the Basin better. Others wanted their children to compete more effectively with whites in the cattle business.

Lang also found that some Indians who had supported the transfer of their children from the boarding schools to the public schools opposed the closing of Whiterocks the next year after their children experienced public education. Many Utes ultimately disapproved of the closing of the boarding school because it threatened their way of life.[19] The move to public-school education jeopardized the physical well-being of the Utes' children by cutting off the furnishment of food and clothing on a year-round basis. The closing of the boarding school endangered the mental well-being of the Utes' children by casting them into a hostile environment where the children's self-images were assaulted daily.

The Ute children all transferred into the public school system by 1952, and their reservation boarding school was gone. The Utes were unwelcome in the schools--many local residents did not want so-called lazy, immoral Utes mixing with their own children. Ute underachievement and non-Indian insensitivity to their educational needs and cultural values continued through the 1960s.

During the 1960s, the University of Utah and Brigham Young University became interested in the problems of the Ute Indians in the public schools. The University of Utah maintained a counseling program at Union High School from 1961 to 1964, and many graduate students in both of the universities' schools of education wrote master's theses on Ute achievement, attitudes, and perceptions about education.

In 1967, one researcher evaluated the mixed results of the University of Utah's counseling program. Between 1958 and 1964, Ute average daily attendance improved. Ute students' grades in vocational and physical education classes rose, possibly as a result of the University's summer program with its camps, supervised recreation, and consultants. But overall, the GPA of the students did not go up significantly. It remained close to the D average of 1958. Ute grades in core classes remained the same, or even went down in some cases.[20]

The researcher concluded that the reason for these poor results was the relationship between the Utes' posture toward the non-Indian world and non-Indian attitudes toward Ute concerns. He noted that Ute students had to display a "withdrawal from white goals" for peer and tribal acceptance, and that non-Indians showed "a lack of understanding and unwillingness to make constructive concessions" to Indian needs. This created a cycle in which the two groups' attitudes reinforced the other's behavior.[21]

Ute achievement seemed especially low in language arts. In 1969 one researcher, Henrik George Lundgren, found that Ute children scored significantly beneath white children on kindergarten language tests. In the third grade, their receptive scores improved (they understood what was said to them), but their expressive scores were still significantly lower than their non-Indian peers. Grammar seemed to be their greatest deficiency.[22] Another researcher concluded that these language problems occurred because Ute parents did not emphasize speaking and reading English at home.[23] Another graduate student concurred with this assessment. She noted that students learned English for school, but spoke Ute at home. She also noted that Ute students fell farther behind in academic achievement as they rose through the grades. This researcher observed that "pedagogical patterns of instruction are not taking into account the kinds of difficulty the Ute Indian child has with English."[24]

But at least one researcher, Lundgren, blamed Ute cultural patterns, rather than Uinta Basin pedagogical patterns. He wrote directly about what many other writers of this decade seem to allude to--the issue of "cultural deprivation." Lundgren stated that the early home patterns of the Utes decreased their motivation to succeed in school, and their goals for the future handicapped their schoolwork. The "right" cultural patterns were not transmitted to them. White children supposedly learned to delay immediate gratification to achieve a distant objective. Middle class parents taught their children to enjoy learning by constantly introducing them to new things. An intensive pre-school program that supplanted earlier patterns with new ones was the answer to this problem, according to Lundgren.[25] Stated succinctly, "since few Utes expect to leave the reservation, they see little reason for acquiring knowledge and skills which they will never need."[26]

The theory of cultural deprivation gave "scientific" justification for what Basin residents had been saying since the 1920s--the Utes have to change; their culture encourages laziness, and their culture is wrong. An attitude close to ethnocentric racism came to be supported by "informed research."

But it would be wrong to assume that Basin problems can be neatly categorized as racist whites and biased researchers versus the repressed Indians. This view is clouded by the fact that some Indians concurred with the mainstream opinion that the Utes had to change their ways in order to live full lives. These Indians did not necessarily agree with assimilation, but they did agree that much of the blame for Ute children's academic failure lay with Ute parents and Ute homes. In an oral interview conducted in 1960, Conner Chapoose stated that the Indian parents did not understand what went on in school, and because they did not understand the system, they could not help their children. He also said that Ute parents openly wondered about the good of schooling in front of their children, and conveyed a sense of directionlessness to them.[27] Other Indian interviewees agreed that the parents were not supportive enough of their children's education and needed to get much more involved.[28] An Indian who had lived extensively off the reservation and gone to school in Salt Lake City said he felt that the Indian young people needed to leave the reservation and see the bigger world. He echoed a non-Indian VISTA volunteer who voiced the prevailing mainstream sentiment that Indian prejudice against whites held them back and slowed their progress.[29]

Local attitudes toward Indian education in the Uintah Basin during the first two decades after World War II followed patterns established during the first half of the twentieth century. The federal government wanted the public schools to be agents of assimilation, but the local non-Indian residents had other ideas. Some white parents did not want Utes in the public schools at all. They felt their own children received a poorer education because the pace of learning in the schools was stunted to meet "the slower learning rate of the Indian children."[30] And although the districts made an effort to provide some special counseling for Indian students, they made no significant effort to shape the curriculum to meet Indians needs. Indians and non-Indians were "taught as a homogeneous group."[31]

But signs did appear in the late 1960s that the Basin school districts were beginning to recognize that Utes had special needs. In 1969 one University of Utah master's student got permission from the Uintah School Board to do a study of Ute children's language problems so that she could make recommendations for solving them.[32] In 1967 the school districts set up a Ute history and culture class at the fourth grade, junior high, and senior high school level using federal funds from Title I of the 1965 Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA).[33]

The use of Title I funds for programs related to the Indian students' needs signaled an important turning point in the federal government's, and in turn the Uinta Basin's, slowly changing ideas of what Indian education was all about. The federal impact aid laws of 1950--PL 874 and PL 815--represented the first efforts to provide new federal funds to school districts since the Johnson-O'Malley Act. These two laws compensated school districts for financial burdens placed on them by federal activities such as military bases. In 1953 they were amended to specifically include the loss of revenue from non-taxable Indian reservation land. PL 874 funds were to be used by school districts in lieu of local taxes for general operating expenses. But the ESEA, passed during President Lyndon Johnson's human rights-minded administration, sought to provide funds to meet the special educational needs of low-income families rather than merely doling out money to school districts as compensation. Special programs to enrich offerings for the "educationally disadvantaged" were the targets of ESEA.[34]

Many Indians in the United States, including the Uintah and Ouray Utes, qualified to receive these funds, while numerous school districts misused ESEA monies by placing them in their general operating budgets.[35] But the Uintah and Duchesne School Districts used this new federal aid correctly. They applied it to their first classes specifically for Indian students.

One important area of continuity existed between the old federal Indian education policies and the new ESEA. The federal government did not consult the Indians about the programs designed for them.[36] Major reform in Indian participation would not occur until 1972. But in the Uinta Basin, stirrings of the forces which led to reform throughout the country were evident in 1970.

The Bureau of Indian Affairs, the Ute Tribe, and the

University of Utah initiated a series of meetings in 1969 to discuss Indian education in the Basin. In 1970 with help from the school districts, the Western States Small Schools Project, and state officials, the Uintah [sic] Basin Educational Council was "organized and charged with the responsibility of developing a program to deal with the problems related to Indian education in the Uintah [sic] Basin."[37] Gloria Thompson said that the formation of the council functioned as the turning point when the Utes "began to fight the things that set us apart from the rest of the kids at school, set us apart as Indians and made us feel like we weren't worth anything."[38]

The Uintah Basin Educational Council consisted of forty-one non-Indian members and thirty-five Indian members. The council formed an administrative committee of five Indians and five non-Indian educators. Between January and April 1970, the council met three or four times a month, identifying problems and outlining goals. Feeling that conflict between Indians and non-Indians constituted the main obstacle, the council attempted to create a dialogue between the two groups. During meetings, small groups composed of both Indians and non-Indians discussed issues. They focused on such concerns as the lack of effective reading programs for both whites and Indians and the lack of sufficient communication between schools and parents and between students and teachers.[39]

In June 1970 the council released a preliminary statement of its goals and plans. The council targeted such problems as the adverse effects of labeling on the Ute students' self-esteem and the lack of Indian representation on education boards and committees. The council also emphasized the absence of teachers qualified to handle the special problems of a culturally mixed school population. The council planned to devise new teaching procedures, improve relationships between the cultures, individualize the curriculum, and work toward increasing educational opportunities for both Indians and non-Indians in the Basin.[40]

In late September of 1970 both the Ute Tribe and the school districts had difficulty finding money to implement their plans--Fred Conetah, a member of the tribal business committee, wrote, "to date no projects have been funded."[41] But Gloria Thompson said that the council led the battle to get Utes trained as teachers for the schools, a program later funded under Title IV, Part B. The council also received some federal funding in the early 1970s under the ESEA for programs to increase the amount of communication between the schools and Indian homes.[42]

Judging the results of the council is difficult. No records or accounts of the council indicate that it was either a success or a failure. Declining effectiveness caused it to be discontinued in 1975.[43] However, the council achieved its most important goal--the members of the Ute tribe and the residents of the school districts were talking to each other. The dialogue, although often acrimonious, continued in the years following.

During the two decades following the closing of the reservation boarding school, Ute life went through a variety of changes. The Utes experienced a brief period of wealth and their children entered the public school system--two events that brought them into closer contact than ever before with non-Indian Basin residents. In the school system, Indian children and non-Indian children were taught as a "homogeneous whole." In many ways the school system was hostile to the Utes and to their culture. But the Utes emerged from these two decades of change (in much the same way Indians across the country did) bent on reforming the school system to respect their culture. They wished to remain Indians.

The federal government had been a guiding force in Ute education since the early 1900s, through educational policy and funding. The Johnson-O'Malley Act, with its tight control over paying tuition on an average daily attendance basis, was the major influence in increasing Ute enrollment in public schools. In the 1940s, the chance for federal funding to construct a new high school caused Basin education leaders to seek increased Ute enrollment in public schools. In many ways the educational policies of the Indian New Deal bypassed the Basin, but the post-World War II policy of termination found fertile ground in which to grow. Nationally between 1900 and 1970, Indian education swung from assimilation to cultural integrity, and then back to assimilation. But in the Uinta Basin, assimilation remained the dominant policy. After nearly three-quarters of a century of attempted forced assimilation by the Basin school districts and the federal government, the Utes (along with other Indians across the country) were ready to demand that the federal government respect their right to their own cultural identity. They insisted that the federal government fulfill its trust responsibilities by funding school reform.

Notes

[1] Francis Paul Prucha, The Great Father: The United States Government and the American Indians. Volume II (Lincoln, 1984), 1060-61.

[2] A. Alwyn Call to Roy Adams, December 14, 1951 and Harold M. Lundell to Roy Adams, March 6, 1952, in Uintah and Ouray Agency Miscellaneous Correspondence, 1897-1912, 1916-1952 (hereafter cited as UOA Misc. Corr.), National Archives, Denver Branch, Record Group 75, BIA, box 10 (hereafter cited as NADB, followed by the appropriate box number; Record Group will be cited at RG). Roy Adams to Ralph M. Gelvin, April 8, 1952, UOA Misc. Corr., NADB, box 19; Forrest R. Stone to Ralph M. Gelvin, March 26, 1951 and Charles B. Emery to Walter V. Woehkle, February 26, 1951, UOA Misc. Corr., NADB, box 21.

[3] Forrest R. Stone to Roy Adams, August 23, 1951, UOA MIsc. Corr., NADB, box 19; Gottfried Otto Lang, "The Ute Development Program: A Study in Culture Change in an Underdeveloped Area within the United States" (doctoral dissertation, Cornell University, 1954), 340; Hildegard Thompson to Roy Adams, April 14, 1952, UOA Misc. Corr., NADB, boxes 10 and 17.

[4] Joseph G. Jorgensen, "Sovereignty and the Structure of Dependency at Northern Ute," American Indian Culture and Research Journal, 10 (Number 2, 1986), 81-82; Wilson Rockwell, The Utes: A Forgotten People (Denver, 1956), 257-59; Paul Sanchez, "Development of the Northern Utes," Uintah and Ouray Agency, 1965, 5, photocopy in Indian Education Files, Office of the Education Coordinator, Ute Tribe Education Division, Ft. Duchesne, Utah (hereafter cited as UTED).

[5] Jorgensen, "Sovereignty," 80; Rockwell, The Utes, 258-59.

[6] Rockwell, The Utes, 259-60; Sanchez, "Development," 5, Indian Education Files, UTED.

[7] Jorgensen, "Sovereignty," 81.

[8] Rockwell, The Utes, 260.

[9] Radio Broadcast, June 18, 1953 and Radio Broadcast, September 3, 1953, UOA Misc. Corr., NADB, box 10.

[10] Darrell D. Atkinson, "Educational Adjustment of Ute

Indians Compared to the Mixed Bloods, and Native Whites at Union High, Roosevelt, Utah" (master's thesis, Utah State Agricultural College, 1955), 5, 25. Statements From the Teachers Concerning Indian Children Enrolled in Union High School and Roy Adams to Charles E. Reed, December 10, 1951, UOA Misc. Corr., NADB, box 21.

[11] A. Alwyn Call to Roy Adams, October 30, 1952, UOA Misc. Corr., NADB, box 18; I. M. Phillips to A. A. Call, March 7, 1952 and A. A. Alwyn Call to Roy Adams, March 18, 1952, UOA Misc. Corr., NADB, boxes 10 and 17.

[12] Lang, "The Ute Development Program," 339; Gottfried O. Lang, "A Study in Culture Contact and Culture Change: The Whiterock Utes in Transition" (University of Utah, Anthropological Papers, no. 15, February, 1953), 61.

[13] Gloria Thompson, oral interview, 1988. See Appendix E.

[14] Ibid.

[15] Atkinson, "Educational Adjustment of Ute Indians," 28-32, 39.

[16] Ibid.

[17] Ibid., 33-35.

[18] Lang, "The Ute Development Program, 338.

[19] Ibid., 335, 339-40.

[20] Phil E. Wennhold, "A Study of Academic Performance by Ute Indian Children" (master's thesis, University of Utah, 1967), 14, 16-17, 23-24, 27.

[21] Ibid., 26.

[22] Henrik George Lundgren, "A Study of the Language Development of Ute Indian Children" (master's thesis, University of Utah, 1969), viii.

[23] Nancy Pederson Abraham, "The Influence of the Tweedy Visual-Lingual Program on the Reading-Readiness Development of Ute Indian and Non-Indian Kindergarten Children" (master's thesis, University of Utah, 1969), 19.

[24] Rosella L. Johnson, "A Survey to Identify and to Compare the Oral Reading Difficulties of Intermediate and Junior High Ute Indian Students in the Public Schools of Duchesne County" (master's thesis, Brigham Young

University, 1967), 1-2, 54.

[25] Lundgren,"A Study of Language Development," 20-22.

[26] AllenDennis Mower, "A Study of the Comparisons of Attitudes and Study Habits of Indian and White Students as Related to the School Programs of Union High School" (master's thesis, Brigham Young University, 1967), 9.

[27] ConnerChapoose, oral interview, August 22, 1960. Duke interview #5, Duke Oral History Collection, Marriot Library, Special Collections, University of Utah, Salt Lake City (hereafter Duke interviews will be identified as a Duke interview followed by their number).

[28] MariettaReed, Duke interview #605, 1970; Katherine Jenks, Duke interview #606, July 23, 1970; Linda Pawwannie, Duke interview #371, September 17, 1968.

[29] WilsonJohnson, Duke interview #55, July 27, 1967; Margaret Eberly, Duke interview #57, August 3, 1967.

[30] Lundgren,"A Study of Language Development," 6.

[31] DeannaYoung Nyman, "A Survey to Determine the Relationship between Attitudes toward School and Achievement of Second-Graders in the Uintah School District" (master's thesis, Brigham Young University, 1969) 1.

[32] Lundgren,"A Study of Language Development," 6.

[33] NormaDenver, oral interview, 1988. See Appendix C.

[34] MargaretConnell Szasz, Education and the American Indian: The Road to Self-Determination Since 1928 (Albuquerque, 1977), 181-87.

[35] Ibid.,182-85.

[36] Ibid.,185.

[37] Thecouncil referred to itself as the "Uintah" Education Council. Fred A. Conetah to D. E. Ostler, September 18, 1970, photocopy in Indian Education Files, UTED.

[38] Conetahto Ostler, September 18, 1970; Ashal J. Evans, Superintendent to Urban/Rural School Development Program, U. S. Office of Education, September 14, 1970, photocopy in Indian Education Files, UTED; Uintah Basin Education Council, "Design for the Improvement of Educational Opportunities," June 22, 1970, a full run of the

minutes of all the January to April 1970 council meeting minutes is available in Indian Education Files, UTED.

[39] GloriaThompson, oral interview, photocopy in Indian Education Files, UTED.

[40] UintahBasin Education Council, "Design," Indian Education Files, UTED.

[41] Conetahto Ostler, September 18, 1970.

[42] Evansto Urban/Rural School Development Program, September 14, 1970; Ute Tribe Education Division, "Ute Indian Tribe Comprehensive Education Plan," September 1983, pp. 81-83, copy in Indian Education Files, UTED.

[43] UteTribe Education Division, "Comprehensive Education Plan," 83, Indian Education Files, UTED.

CHAPTER III

THE POLICY OF SELF-DETERMINATION AND DEMANDS FOR ITS FULFILLMENT--1972-1987

A turning point in federal Indian education policy occurred in the 1960s when government agencies other than the Bureau of Indian Affairs began to get involved in Indian education issues. A Senate Special Subcommittee on Indian Education made a report in November 1969 exposed the fact that across America, Indians were not being educated properly. It became known as the Kennedy Report, named for Senator Robert Kennedy, the chairman until his assassination in 1968, and Senator Edward Kennedy, who directed the final stages of research and writing. The subcommittee found that Indians achieved well below normal and faced prejudice in school. "The committee insisted on increased participation and control by Indians of their education..."[1] The Office of Education did its own study in 1970 under the direction Robert J. Havighurst, and it too recommended that Indians needed to be involved in the planning and decision-making of educational programs.[2]

Indian leaders whose activities in the 1960s had shown the need for more governmental efforts were encouraged by these reports. They fought harder than ever for reform.

Several intertribal groups won the right to review Johnson-O'Malley programs, and the National Indian Leadership Training program in New Mexico launched a campaign to educate Indian parents about what they could do to have an effect on local school systems.[3] Indian educators organized a National Indian Education Association in 1969. The Navajos established a tribally run school known as the Rough Rock Demonstration School in 1966, and in 1968, they established the Navajo Community College--the first college to be directed and controlled by Indians. One of the main goals for all the Indian groups was stricter accountability of how school districts used funds. Indian groups were well aware of the fact that much of the aid went directly into general operating budgets.[4]

The federal government responded to Indian demands in 1970. In a key speech in July, President Richard M. Nixon called for a federal Indian policy of "self-determination without termination" which included educational, economic, and governmental goals. The Indian Self-Determination Act was not passed until 1975, but the Educational Amendments Act of 1972 included the Indian Education Act (IEA), known to educators as Title IV. Under this act, the federal government provided money for special educational services to Indians, such as adult education, curriculum development, the development of new and innovative methods, and the training of Indian education personnel and counselors. In essence the act amended the ESEA to specifically include Indians.[5]

Involving Indians in educational planning was the main goal of the IEA. The federal government created a National Advisory Council in the U. S. Office of Education made up of fifteen Indian and native Alaskan members. Tribes and other Indian organizations nominated members, and the president appointed the council from these nominations. The council reviewed applications for federal assistance, provided technical assistance, and advised the Office of Indian Education.[6]

In the 1970s, the Utes were in a better position than usual to take advantage of the spirit of reform and develop programs using their own and federal monies. The Arab oil embargo of 1973 sent the value of Ute oil lease revenues skyhigh for the next nine years. The tribe suddenly had an annual operating budget of $16,000,000, and it poured this money into new economic enterprises and the development of new education programs.[7]

The tribe used Title IV funds and their own funds for two principal projects. The first was the further development of the Ute history program in the schools, especially through the development of curriculum materials. The second was a new emphasis upon communication on a variety of levels, such as counseling to facilitate better student-teacher interaction and the formation of parent advisory committees to increase parental involvement.

The first program operated under Title IV involved what Ute children encounter in the classroom. A class devoted to Ute history and culture began in 1967 under Title I funding, but has been operated under Title IV since 1972.[8] Norma Denver is a Caucasian woman who married an Indian. She became involved in the history program at its inception and directed it for many years. When Norma Denver talked about the program, it was always with pride. In unrecorded interviews she indicated that the Indian children gained chances to speak up and actively participate in the class, which they did not receive in other classes in school. Away from the rigidly formal core classes which taught only the dominant culture's values, and where teachers often passed over Ute children, the Indian students' natural buoyancy and willingness to learn shone through. Norma Denver stated that the tribal history course was the children's first real chance to learn about their own people in the school setting. This motivated them to like school and like learning.[9]

The history program initially existed at the elementary, junior high, and high school level. A class was taught at Union High School in the Duchesne school district. Today the program survives only at the West Jr. High in the Uintah school district. Children learned about their Indian heritage, took field trips to local historic sites, participated in Indian recognition days, and wrote a research paper on Ute history. Each year some of the children had an opportunity to take a field trip to Washington, D.C.[10] From the Indian point of view, the most important goal of this program was to improve their children's self-esteem and teach them to be proud to be Ute. Every report written on Ute Indian education at the tribal, local, and state level, both Indian and non-Indian, since the 1960s emphasized the need to counteract the effects of the mainstream culture's tendency to lower the Indian student's feeling of self-worth.

One of the most important features of the Ute history class has been the generation of curriculum material specific to Ute culture. Curriculum development has been an important feature of federal funding since the passage of Title IV. Curriculum development at the state level in Utah has been ongoing since 1979.

When Wil Numkena, a Hopi, became the Special Assistant for Indian Education at the Utah State Board of Education in 1978, he found that the state's library and film resources had no Indian-studies material available for the school districts' use. The school districts themselves had almost no materials in their libraries and media centers. Wil Numkena's office and the Indian Education Advisory Committee began a massive campaign to rectify this shortcoming. The committee produced filmstrips on Utah

Indians, and added maps and charts detailing Indian history and economics to the state's resources. Curriculum planning guides were developed, too.[11]

The Ute Tribe initiated such efforts two years before the Utah State Board of Education became involved. In 1976 and 1977, with Title IV federal funds and technical assistance from the American West Center at the University of Utah, the Ute Tribe curriculum development staff researched and produced a series of booklets which were used in the Ute history class and made available through the Tribal Education Division to any interested parties. Between 30 and 60 pages long, the booklets included such titles as, "The Ute People," "The Ute System of Government," "Ute Ways," "A Brief History of the Ute People," and the "The Way it was Told." The booklets contained chronologies of Ute history and lists of Ute leaders, as well as drawings, photographs, maps, charts, and graphs. Many incorporated a workbook section at the back for self-guided study.[12]

The second program operated under Title IV involved communication: counseling to augment communication between the schools and the Indian children, and the establishment of parent advisory committees to increase communication between parents and the schools. In addition to the staff needed for the Ute history program, Title IV funds supported the hiring of a counselor. The Title IV counselor became responsible for advising Indian children who had academic, attendance, and behavior problems, and for facilitating communication between the school and home.

The most important way Title IV legislation encouraged a dialogue between parents and the schools was by the formation of parent advisory committees. Title IV made mandatory the participation of parents in the establishment and implementation of impact-aid programs.[13] At the local level, Indian education leaders embraced this goal more readily than parents.

Parent advisory committees could conduct needs assessments to determine how Title IV money should be spent and to evaluate the programs once implemented. In the Uintah basin, many Indian parents were apathetic toward the new opportunity to speak out about their children's education. Many attempts to start active committees in the Basin failed. In one case, Forrest Cuch, the tribe's education director, had to explain to the Office of Indian Education that the education division had not yet held their mandatory public hearing on Title IV programs because parents in Duchesne county did not attend the meetings. The parents had repeatedly failed to elect an Indian representative for the tribe's education committee. Another report stated that of the five Basin Indian communities of Whiterocks, Ft. Duchesne, Randlett, Ouray, and Myton, only Whiterocks had an active committee during

1977.[14] There have been, and are, active Indian parents, but they seem to be a small minority.

In 1978, the Arizona based National Indian Training and Research Center offered one explanation for the parents' apathy when the Ute tribe called it in to do an educational needs assessment of Indian children. The Center found that with the increase in federal funding, which required needs assessments as part of grant proposals, parents were approached again and again with the same questions but their children seemed to do no better in school. The outside evaluators wrote that, "feeling harassed," parents began "to view the whole effort as a farce."[15]

It is interesting to note, however, that if their culture were attacked directly in the schools, Ute parents responded quickly. In 1972, West Junior High suspended seven boys because they wore long hair, violating a two-year-old dress code. A long battle began between the Utes and the school district. A few days after the incident occurred, 204 Ute parents attended a meeting to plan for the confrontation. This turnout amounted to roughly ten times the number of parents that normally attended Title IV meetings.[16]

The Utes protested that the school district was being inflexible and acting against individual rights. The school district maintained that certain standards of cleanliness and proper dress had to be enforced or the school district would not be teaching children a proper way of life. One school board member stated that as soon as boys began wearing their hair long, girls would start wearing short skirts and the boys would be too distracted to learn anything. The Utes maintained that long hair was a part of their culture and a symbol of pride. The battle eventually went through the district court system, and in 1974 the combatants reached a compromise. Ute students were permitted to wear their hair long if they signed an agreement with the school district stating they would, "braid, wrap and/or tie it with the dignity and pride of my people."[17]

The difference between the Ute parents' reactions to the long hair issue and to the Title IV programs illuminates an important Ute attitude. The Utes were not apathetic about school programs because they lacked concern about their children and their culture. Rather, they lost faith in the ability of the formal schooling experience to meet their children's needs. They did not waste energy where they thought it would do no good, but the parents did respond to outright attempts to force their children to obey non-Indian standards.

In a way, life on the reservation reinforced this attitude that a white education would not help their children. According to a woman who worked extensively with the Utes in the early 1980s, a good education did not help Utes advance in tribal jobs. The tribe has been and remains the single greatest employer of Utes.[18] Tribal members with college degrees do not hold better jobs than less-educated members. Ute society remains essentially egalitarian, and administrators often switch from one job to another. Some important leaders have only a few years of elementary education. A college degree does not equate with high standing within the tribe.[19]

The Basin school districts have used federal Title IV money for a course on Ute culture for Indian students, for the development of relevant curriculum materials, and for a counseling program. The tribe has had limited success in encouraging parental participation. Three facets of the implementation of Title IV have stood in the way of greater success for the history and counseling programs: the programs operated almost exclusively in Uintah county; the core curriculum remained unaffected by other changes made to accommodate Utes; and the relationship between the Ute Title IV staff and district teachers and administrators has not been smooth.

The effectiveness of Title IV programs has been lessened by the distinctly different levels of commitment Uintah and Duchesne county school districts have to Indian education. The Uintah school district felt the main impact of the Title IV program, rather than Duchesne, primarily because of the large concentration of Indian students at Todd Elementary and West Jr. High where they are 50% of the school population. Duchesne school district limited Title IV programs to counseling at the elementary and secondary school level, where there are far fewer Indian students than in Uintah county. An average of seventy Indian students attended Union High School in Duchesne county, but after document searches and informal interviews with district personnel, it must be concluded that they have received no special programs at all.[20]

Indian students have confronted a critical change when they transfer from Uintah's West Jr. High to Duschesne's Union High School. The drop-out rate among Union High School students has always been high, and sometimes approached 50%.[21] The majority of the students who attend the high school came through Title IV programs in earlier grades, where there was at least some effort to meet their needs. When they entered the high school, they faced a school system in Duchesne county less accommodating to their culture. Their peer group was also much smaller and a definite minority at the high school. In a phone interview with one administrator there, the person became hostile when it was suggested that the Utes should have a special program. She stated that the Utes should be treated just like everybody else. Forrest Cuch stated that the Duchesne County school district was less aware of and knowledgeable about the Utes. Cuch also indicated that the tribe was less actively involved in Duchesne because the vast majority of the Indians lived in the Uintah School district.[22]

The place of Title IV programs within the school curriculum became a second obstacle to success. The fact that the program remained outside of the schools' core curriculum troubled many Title IV personnel. There had been no real change in the schools' methods and curriculum for the majority of the Indian students' school day. Betty Jo Kramer, a member of the Anthropology Department of the University of Utah, was employed by the tribe as an education administrator in the early 1980s. She noted that Indian material was not integrated into the standard curriculum. Kramer concluded that the Indian programs were regarded as something that the Ute children were excused from regular school to attend. Bob Chapoose, the Title IV counselor at West Jr. High, agreed with this assessment when he reported that the whole Title IV Program was treated as "a satellite outside the regular school curriculum."[23]

Norma Denver, the Title IV district coordinator, agreed with Chapoose that the Indian programs have been outside the curriculum. She, like Chapoose, stated that Indian culture has not been injected into any other classes. Denver wished that Indian poetry were incorporated into English classes and more that more Ute history were incorporated in standard social studies classes.[24]

The separateness of Indian programs led to the third obstacle that Title IV programs faced. Bob Chapoose reported that the absence of Indian materials from the core curriculum often caused a we/they relationship between district and tribal personnel. In March 1985 he attended the Western Indian Education Conference in Salt Lake City using tribal funds. When he returned to school, however, he found that he could not implement new ideas because the teachers would not integrate his suggestions into their classes. Chapoose reported that the school district refused to adequately use local reservation resources, and also would not integrate Indian culture into the regular curriculum. He felt that his suggestions were not seriously considered because Indian para-professionals were not respected as knowledgeable professionals. According to Chapoose, the school district treated the Title IV director and counselor as "an advocate or helper," rather than as "staff."[25]

After the implementation of Title IV programs in the Uintah school district, the relationship between the tribe and the district became more complex. In the mid-1970s, the Ute Tribal Education Division began a drive to become more involved in the education process. Spearheaded by

Forrest Cuch, who became education coordinator in 1974, the tribe demanded that it have a say in how programs for Ute children were run. During the summer of 1974, Cuch wrote letters to the school district stating that the tribe's education division should have a role in evaluating Johnson-O'Malley personnel. He also asked for written commitments stating that the tribe would have an input in how the money was spent. He wanted the tribe to be able to have a say in who got hired as a counselor, and Cuch also wanted the authority to monitor and evaluate the program throughout the year.[26]

By 1977, Cuch demanded that the Utes be heard in areas other than federal programs. When the Uintah School District held a teacher in-service training program entitled "Todd Elementary Unified Approach to Indian Education," Cuch wanted to know why the tribe was not asked to participate in its planning and implementation. He especially wanted to be involved in the planning of a section on cultural awareness. Cuch stressed that in the future, the tribe wanted to be involved in such events.[27]

Relations between the tribal education division and the Uintah School District reached a low point later in 1977. The School District failed to apply in time for Title IV funding for the 1977-78 school year, and bitter words were sent to the district from both the tribal education division and the business committee.[28] The chairperson of the Tribal Business Committee, Ruby Black, stated to the superintendent, "We are informed that this failure was a definite oversight on the part of you and your staff."[29] She worried that Ute history and language courses would be reduced or eliminated. She also wrote that Superintendent Reid had told Forrest Cuch that the budget was already set and nothing could be done. Black felt that the district should use PL 874 funds to make sure the programs continued.[30]

Reid waited over a week and responded with the following:

> I accept the responsibility of staff members under my charge of failing to receive funding this year under Title IV, Part A. I might only state in defense that Mr. Allen, our assistant superintendent...and Mr. Pinola, our Indian specialist, both were new to the program. Add to this the fact that Mr. Allen had just lost a child and his wife was seriously ill in the Provo Hospital. This took him away for one and two weeks, and unfortunately at this time of year when the grant should have been handled. I personally was under the assumption it had been handled correctly until I received the word."[31]

Reid seemed to conclude that the whole matter was not really the school district's fault. It was apparently just an unfortunate accident that had nothing to do with the district's amount of commitment to Indian programs. Reid went on to say that the school district did all it could for Indian students, but that it cost much more to educate them than other students in the district. Reid complained about the cost of educating the Utes in the same letter in which he wanted to excuse the loss of over $50,000 in federal aid because his staff were new to the program and having personal problems.[32]

Cuch was not happy with this reply. He accused the superintendent of trying to pacify the tribe with soft words. Cuch wanted the district to fund the Title IV positions of the Ute history teacher and the counselor with district funds since the district failed to apply for federal funding. Cuch wrote that there was too much miscommunication between the district and the tribe about who funded what, and he wanted the school district to acknowledge their responsibility to the Ute people and live up to it. Cuch went as far as writing to the Native American Rights Fund to ask about possible legal action against the district on the grounds of negligence.[33] The school district did not cut any programs that year, and the next year it received Title IV funds again.

Another incident in 1977 illuminated well how each side interpreted the other's actions. In March 1977 the principal of West Jr. High stuck his fingers in his ears and called a Ute girl a liar during a disciplinary session. The Ute Education Division perceived this incident as racist, stating that it was one more link in a chain of incidents that pointed to tension between Indian and non-Indian students, and between Indian students and non-Indian teachers. Cuch stated that he heard an increasing number of complaints from parents about the principal's actions. He wrote,

> In most cases, I find that Mr. Good is overreacting and failing to employ equal treatment and exercise diplomacy in all matters concerning the Indian students. I make this claim with full knowledge that I may have to substantiate this information to the fullest extent and I stand ready to carry this out if requested.[34]

The Ute Tribe Education Division recommended that the school board hold a formal hearing to investigate Mr. Good's actions.[35]

The Superintendent of the Uintah School District, Dr. L. Wayne Reid, responded to the incident in a different way. He acknowledged that an emotional situation had gotten out of hand and stated that the school district did not support the principal's actions. The child's welfare concerned Reid the most, however. He noted that the girl started school three weeks late, and only after the welfare department threatened her parents. Since then she had had truancy problems. Superintendent Reid saw the problem as one arising from irresponsible parenting rather than racial tension.[36]

Another issue which surfaced in 1977 involved Ute dissatisfaction with the effects of their isolation twenty-two miles from the school district office in Vernal. In particular, the Johnson-O'Malley director worked in Vernal and thus could not keep track of the program on a day-to-day basis. When a quick decision was needed, he could not be found. The tribe wanted him housed on the west side of the district, either at West Jr. High or the Tribal Learning Center. They felt this would make the program run more smoothly.[37]

In 1978, the year following the above incidents, the Ute history program had been in the Uintah School District for a decade and the Title IV programs were six years old. However, Ute achievement in the mainstream culture's schooling system had not risen significantly above the early failures of the 1950s. Children at the elementary and junior high level still fell further and further behind their non-Indian counterparts in each grade. The high school results revealed that in 1973, one third of the Ute students between the ages of fifteen and eighteen were not in school, in 1976-77 the dropout rate was sixteen percent, and the 1977 graduating class contained only eight of the thirty-eight Utes who had begun in ninth grade, four years earlier. An equal number of Ute students attended the Union High School and BIA secondary schools. Yet over the years most of the small number of Ute high school graduates had attended the BIA schools.[38]

The dropout rate remained high because many Indian students were unprepared to perform needed school work at Union High School. In 1985, although over half the ninth grade class at West Jr. High had failed English and a quarter had failed math, with a substantial number failing social studies as well, ninety-six percent of them continued to high school. Thirteen students graduated to high school out of twenty-four (meaning that at least one or two of them graduated despite failing English), four were passed on due to their age, and six were allowed to move up if they completed summer school.[39]

Indian education programs expanded in the Basin in the late 1970s when the Uintah school district added language courses operated under Title VII of the 1965 ESEA to the curriculum, which already included Title IV Ute history and counseling programs. The Ute tribe had begun to feel that their language should be included in what was taught to their children in school. The Ute Education Division began language projects in 1978 with initial funding from the Utah Endowment for the Humanities, and received funds from the State Bilingual Education Program as well. "Standards and Guidelines for Bilingual Education," approved by the Utah State Board of Education in August 1977 stated:

> the basic purpose of the program is to teach concepts in the child's native tongue while developing the child's skill, knowledge and understanding of English. As soon as English is controlled, instruction in the child's native tongue is discontinued.[40]

The Ute Indians disagreed with the wording of this goal, however. The Tribal Education Division expected the program to improve their children's English and their achievement, but they stated that their aim was to:

> retain and expand the use of the Ute language and preserve Ute cultural traditions. The primary intent of these projects is to strengthen self-concept and identity among Ute Indian Youth and the Ute Indian community in general.[41]

Replacing their own language with English represented the opposite of Ute bilingual goals.

A bilingual program called Wykoopah, meaning "two ways," began in 1980. Because its funding came from Title VII of the ESEA, the Uintah School District administered it.[42] But the staff mostly belonged to the Ute tribe. The staff consisted of a project director, curriculum specialist, project secretary, and three teaching assistants. They received training from Dr. William Leap, a linguist from Washington, D.C., and technical assistance from the Bilingual Education Service Center of Arizona State University, especially in the area of curriculum development. All the staff took continuing-education courses to learn new skills and obtain degrees. An external evaluator from Tucson, Arizona, reported that District administrative staff and teachers supported the program, although the classroom teachers did not get involved in the program and only passively observed the teaching aides at work.[43] The evaluator found the program to be vigorous and growing, especially in the area of curriculum development, which the project staff developed from scratch.

The Wykoopah Program had three components. The first was instructional. Bilingual lessons were taught for one-half hour a day to both Indians and non-Indians, and they paralleled concepts taught in the regular classes. The program intended for regular and bilingual teachers to work together, but the regular teachers usually left the room during classes. The other two components were staff development (their training efforts are outlined above), and parent involvement. Parents were approached to contribute knowledge to classes and work as volunteers in the classroom.[44]

Controversies about the bilingual program surfaced within the tribe. First, many Ute parents did not want to share the class with non-Indians. They wanted to retain exclusive control of their language, and they did not want some aspects of Ute culture discussed in the public schools (much as many non-Indians feel that sex and other subjects should be taught at home, not at school). Second, parents disagreed about which of the three Ute dialects to teach--Uncompahgre, White River, or Uintah. The education division finally decided on Uncompahgre.[45]

One problem Title VII bilingual staff had in common with Title IV counseling and Ute history staff was what one observer characterized as "the 'we' and 'they' attitude" between the Indian program personnel and the school district personnel. The district administration and the regular teachers viewed the bilingual project as the "domain" of the bilingual teachers, and the regular teachers did not get actively involved in the program.[46]

Friction between project staff and the regular teaching staff usually occurred over the issue of classroom control and discipline. Many of the regular teachers did not consider the bilingual teachers to be properly trained. The Ute staff did not tell children what to do, but rather assigned them a task, left them alone to complete it, and expected the children to learn from their own mistakes. The non-Indian teachers seemed to think the children would learn more by sitting still and listening. Venita Taveapont, director of the program, stated that the children were allowed to move about but they were moving and working in a constructive manner. The bilingual teachers exercised a different kind of control--one based on rapport with the students and motivation to learn.[47]

The Wykoopah program ran from 1980 to 1986 at Todd Elementary. Designed on a capacity-building basis, the federal government funded it with an initial three-year grant to get it set up, and then a second three-year grant to judge its success. After that period of time, the federal government stopped funding. If the program was successful, the school district should take over the responsibility of paying for its operation. The Uintah school district failed to do this--for budgetary reasons, according to the district, and because of lack of commitment according to the Ute Education Division. The Ute Tribe took over the program in 1986 with a three-year federal grant. They operated it outside of the school district as the Ute Family Literacy program.[48]

The issues of budgets and funding increased in importance in the 1980s. In 1983, the Uintah school district received $63,557 for Title IV programs, $49,942 in 1985, and $45,307 in 1987.[49] In 1983, the counselor-tutor position in Duchesne county had to be cut back to half-time and limited to two schools because of budget reductions. The counselor spent only ten hours a week at Myton Elementary, and another ten hours at Union High School, which had sixty Ute students.[50] In 1987, a Uintah county administrator wrote a cover letter about two in-service training opportunities in Indian education, which stated, "there is no funding under the Title IV budget to cover the cost of the two workshops on the enclosed vouchers. Title IV funding has decreased each year, leaving us the bare minimum to keep the program alive."[51]

Despite funding problems, in the early 1980s, a crucial transition occurred in Indian thinking about their participation in their children's education. Title IV programs made parent input mandatory through the establishment of parent advisory committees, but the Indians began to desire a different role. An advisory function was not enough any more. Federal legislation gave

American Indians the right to administer Johnson-O'Malley programs in 1977, and the Utes took over that function the next year. In the early 1980s, a movement began at the national level for Indian administrative control of other education programs. In August 1982, the Ute business committee wrote a resolution supporting the National Advisory Council on Indian Education's plans to shift Title IV programs from the federal Department of Education to the Department of the Interior, Bureau of Indian Affairs. The resolution read:

> The Ute Tribal Business Committee believes that the Title IV, Part A Programs are not being administered effectively...[it] is considered a weak program in relation to other Indian education programs administered by the Ute Indian Tribe, such as the Ute Johnson O'Malley Program Contract.[52]

The tribe's Johnson-O'Malley program had many of the same components as the Title IV program, but it did more than the Title IV program in some areas. The Johnson-O'Malley program run by the tribe included teacher in-service training, head start curriculum, summer school, and youth leadership training.[53]

Some school district personnel felt the Title IV could be run more effectively as well. Roger Beckstead, the new Elementary Education Director for the Uintah school district wrote in late 1987:

> After reviewing the grant application for the 1986-87 year and the objectives contained therein, I feel it was never made clear to the

> Title IV staff the kinds of data they should be keeping in order to verify the objectives. Consequently, the data does not exist at this time to complete the report in what I consider to be an acceptable way.[54]

Beckstead used attendance as an example. The objective stated that it was to rise five percent, but the Indian counselors told him they did not have the correct records. When the report was finally completed, including data on reading skills, Beckstead checked the box labeled, "50 percent or less of objectives were met". Beckstead did report that he felt the single Ute history class was a successful, high-quality program.[55]

But the fact remained that the Indians still failed in the public school system. Bob Chapoose's 1984-85 Title IV counselor report made it clear that at the junior high school level, over fifty percent of the children failed English, and nearly that many failed math and social studies.[56] In 1982, Norma Denver observed that "it happened before they got there."[57] In other words, the children remained in the pattern of starting school behind their non-Indian counterparts, falling further behind as the years went by, until eventually a substantial amount of them dropped out of high school.

Perhaps because the majority of the Ute students continued to fail in the school system, the Ute tribe wanted to take over the running of the Title IV program. In 1982, Glenda Arrowchis, chairperson of one of the parent advisory committees, said, "I'm tired of excuses....I'm fed up with it."[58]The Ute Tribal Education Division wanted things to change.

From the school district's point of view, Basin public school administrators had tried to change. If the tribe felt that there was an attitude of separateness, the school district recognized it as well. At a parent advisory committee meeting in 1982, Grant Drollinger, the Uintah school district's Title IV Coordinator, responded to comments made by Forrest Cuch on the need for better coordination between teachers and the advisory committee, stating:

> I think that the only way that will be accomplished is if we work together as a team, we have problems, we need to improve, and I believe that....then you make the statement if we don't do it then you are attempting to sue the school district. Now you are isolating us again and you are not leaving us together or keeping us together working at the problem.[59]

Drollinger believed the Utes did not work with the school district, but against it.[60] In the spring of 1988, another Uintah administrator stated that the district had openly cooperated with a test Dr. William Leap wanted to conduct in conjunction with the Ute Tribal Education Division. Dr. Leap and the Tribal Education Division failed to get back to him about the results, and the district never heard another word about it. The administrator viewed the incident as a serious breech of courtesy.

District administrators also complained that the Utes did not understand the complexities of running a school district. At a parent advisory committee meeting in 1982, Forrest Cuch stated that the school district had been irresponsible with funds by using money to add to buildings rather than improving programs. But Grant Drollinger responded, "You have to remember you have M and O monies and capital outlay monies...its illegal to use capital outlays for M and O (maintenance and operation)."[61] At the same meeting, the Indian parents wanted to terminate a teacher and hire someone else. Drollinger tried to explain that tenured teachers could not be hired and fired at will. He explained that proper procedure for termination required two years of dismissal procedures. The chairperson of the committee then stated that the tribe would simply pull the funds out from under the teacher, which Drollinger said they could not do. He explained that if proper dismissal procedures were not followed, the teacher could sue the school district.[62]

Informal interviews with other district administrators in the spring of 1988 confirmed that district staff often felt like they were caught in a vise--the Utes closed in from one side, and federal forms, rules, and regulations closed in from the other.

The Ute tribe and the school district are not partners in Indian education. Both sides often tend to think parochially and fail to recognize problems that the other faces. Rather than working together to use education to make the Basin a better place for both races, the school district regards the Utes as a constant, gnawing ache, and the tribe treats the school district as a hostile foe with nothing but oppression on its mind.

It would seem that separateness has defeated federal programs designed to "help" Indian youth in the Uinta Basin. Gloria Thompson stated that she felt the establishment of the Uintah Basin Education Council was a turning point in 1970; the Utes fought what had kept them separate and apart from others in the schools. But the Utes remained isolated. Title IV Ute history and counseling programs initiated in 1972 had no effect on the core curriculum in the Basin. Indian children learned to respect their culture for an hour a day, and then returned to a world which told them they needed to change their Ute value system. In the early 1980s, dissatisfied with that arrangement, the Utes did not want the local school district to administer their history and counseling programs anymore. The Utes wanted separate control over them.

Through the 1920s and 1930s, and in the 1950s and the 1960s, when the federal government wanted the public schools to be agents of assimilation, the Utes remained separate and their children failed to gain a mainstream education. In the 1970s and the 1980s, the federal government's policy shifted to one of self-determination, but in many cases Indian parents failed to try to make that policy work for them. Whether the federal government favored assimilation or self-determination, the Utes continued to remain outside the educational framework. Their children continued to fail and not complete a public school education. Apparently they did not want a mainstream education.

Notes

[1] Francis Paul Prucha, The Great Father: The United States Government and the American Indians. Volume II (Lincoln, 1984), 1103-06, 1139-40).

[2] Ibid: 1103-06, 1139-40.

[3] Margaret Connell Szasz, Education and the American Indian: The Road to Self-Determination Since 1928 (Albuquerque, 1977), 185-196.

[4] Ibid.; Prucha, The Great Father, 1102.

[5] Szasz, Education and the American Indian, 198; Prucha, The Great Father, 1140; Americo D. Lapati, Education and the Federal Government: A Historical Record (New York, 1975), 45-47; Donald K. Sharpes, "Federal Education for the American Indian," Journal of American Indian Education, 19 (October 1979), 21-22.

[6] Lapati, Education, 47.

[7] Joseph G. Jorgensen, "Sovereignty and the Structure of Dependency at Northern Ute," American Indian Culture and Research Journal, 10 (Number 2, 1986), 83-84.

[8] Wilcox, "Programs of the Ute Indian Tribe, Uintah and Ouray Agency, Fort Duchesne, Utah," 1970, photocopy in the Indian Education Files, Office of the Education Coordinator, Ute Tribe Education Division, Ft. Duchesne, Utah (hereafter cited as UTED).

[9] Norma Denver, oral interview, 1988. See Appendix C.

[10] Ibid.

[11] WilNumkena, "A Report on Indian Education in the State of Utah, 1978-79," 7; Ibid. (1979-80), 3; Ibid. (1980-81), 7-8, photocopies in the Indian Education Files, Office of the Special Assistant for Indian Education, Utah State Board of Education, Salt Lake City (hereafter cited as USBE).

[12] UteTribal Education Division, "Ute Indian Tribe Comprehensive Education Plan," 1983, p. 6, in Indian Education Files, UTED. All these curriculum materials are copyright 1977 by the Ute Tribe and are in Indian Education Files, UTED.

[13] Szasz, Education and the American Indian, 199.

[14] "TitleIV Part A Proposal;" Forrest S. Cuch to Chuck Emory, Office of Indian Education, n.d. (1977), photocopy in Indian Education Files, UTED.

[15] National Indian Training and Research Center, "Needs Assessment for Ute Education Department and the Uintah School District, 1978-79," 2, photocopy in Indian Education Files, UTED.

[16] Uintah Basin Standard, November 9, 1972.

[17] Bruce G. Parry, Division of Indian Affairs to Governor Calvin L. Rampton, October 26, 1972; Ute Tribal Members, Parents, and Uintah County School Board Meeting, Minutes, October 13, 1972; David C. VanderKraats, Community Development Specialist to Forrest Cuch, January 30, 1974; Student-Administration Contract, West Jr. High, 1974; Lynn A. Ravesten to Ashel Evans, Superintendent, October, 19, 1973; Meeting Minutes, Long Hair Issue, September 13, 1973; Robert C. Chapoose to Deseret News and Salt Lake Tribune, n.d.; Ute Tribe Education Division to Dr. Walter Talbot, State Superintendent, October 20, 1972; photocopies of all of the above in Indian Education Files, UTED.

[18] As a general rule, the Utes do not enter the mainstream workforce in the Basin. Unemployment among Utes is high, and the vast majority who do have jobs, hold tribal jobs. The greatest number of tribal jobs are available in education, law enforcement, and maintenance. Betty Jo Kramer, "The Dismal Record Continues: The Ute Indian Tribe and the School System," Ethnic Groups, 5 (1983), 168; Ute Tribal Education Division, "Comprehensive Education Plan," 43-51, Indian Education Files, UTED; Jorgensen, "Sovereignty and the Structure of Dependence," 92.

[19] Kramer, "The Dismal Record," 163.

[20] Wil Numkena, "A Report on Indian Education," (1978), 7; Title IV Part A Proposal, 1977-78 (Duchesne)," photocopy in Indian Education Files, UTED; Uintah School District usually has between 400 and 500 Indian students, as compared to Duchesne's 100 to 200 Indian students, of which approximately 70 attend Union High School, see Ute Tribal Education Division, "Comprehensive Education Plan," 60-62, Indian Education Files, UTED.

[21] National Indian Training and Research Center, "Needs Assessment," 17, Indian Education Files, UTED; Ute Tribal Education Division, "Comprehensive Education Plan," 73-74, Indian Education Files, UTED.

[22] ForrestCuch, oral interview, 1988. See Appendix B.

[23] Kramer,"The Dismal Record," 163; Robert C. Chapoose, Sr., "Title IV Counselor Fiscal School Year Report, 1984-85," 6, 9, photocopy in Indian Education Files, USBE.

[24] NormaDenver, oral interview.

[25] Chapoose,"Title IV Counselor," 6, 9, Indian Education Files, UTED.

[26] Forrest S. Cuch to Frank Andreason, Director of Pupil Personnel, July 23, 1974; Forrest S. Cuch to Frank M. Andreason, June 21, 1974; photocopies in Indian Education Files, UTED.

[27] ForrestS. Cuch to John Childs, January 26, 1977, photocopy in Indian Education Files, UTED.

[28] WilNumkena, "Report on Indian Education Activities in the State of Utah," 1978, p. 7, photocopy in Indian Education Files, USBE.

[29] RudyA. Black, Chairperson of the Ute Tribal Business Committee, to Dr. L. Wayne Reid, Superintendent, August 31, 1977, photocopy in Indian Education Files, UTED.

[30] Ibid.

[31] Dr.L. Wayne Reid, Superintendent to Mrs. Ruby A. Black, September 9, 1977, photocopy in Indian Education Files, UTED.

[32] Ibid.

[33] Forrest S. Cuch to Dr. L. Wayne Reid, September 13, 1977; Forrest S. Cuch to John Waubunche, Native American Rights Fund, September 13, 1977; photocopies of the above in Indian Education Files, UTED.

[34] ForrestS. Cuch to Dr. Reid, April 6, 1977, photocopy in Indian Education Files, UTED.

[35] Ibid.

[36] Dr.L. Wayne Reid to Forrest Cuch, March 25, 1977, photocopy in Indian Education Files, UTED.

[37] ForrestS. Cuch to Dr. L. Wayne Reid, November 3, 1977, photocopy in Indian Education Files, UTED.

[38] NationalIndian Training and Research Center, "Needs Assessment," 11-17, 33, Indian Education Files, UTED.

[39] Chapoose,"Title IV Counselor," 2-7, Indian Education Files, UTED.

[40] ElliotC. Howe, Coordinator of Bilingual Education to District Directors of State Bilingual Education Programs, August 23, 1977, in the Indian Education Files, Office of the Elementary Education Director, Uintah School District, Vernal, Utah (hereafter cited to as EED); Ute Tribal Education Division, "Comprehensive Education Plan," 7, appendix, Indian Education Files, UTED.

[41] UteTribal Education Division, "Comprehensive Education Plan," 21, Indian Education Files, UTED.

[42] Ibid.,22.

[43] DenisF. Viri, "Interim External Evaluation Report: 'Wykoopah' Bilingual Education Project," February 25, 1981, photocopy in Indian Education Files, EED.

[44] GesineShroeter-Temme, "Wykoopah--A Northern Ute Bilingual Project," 1983, pp. 8-9, photocopy in Indian Education Files, UTED.

[45] Ibid.,11-12.

46Viri, "Interim Evaluation," Indian Education Files, EED.

[47] Shroeter-Temme,"Wykoopah," Indian Education Files, UTED; Venita Taveapont, oral interview, 1988.

[48] ForrestCuch, oral interview; Venita Taveapont, oral interview, 1988. See Appendix D.

[49] Departmentof Education Grant Report C06, 8/20/86; Ibid. (9/7/84); Department of Education Grant and Procurement Report B06, 5/10/82; photocopies of the above in Indian Education Files, USBE.

[50] DennisMower, Assistant Superintendent of Duchesne County School District to Forrest Cuch, March 2, 1983, photocopy in Indian Education Files, UTED.

[51] DixieAllen to Jan Nelson, January 20, 1987, photocopy in Indian Education Files, EED.

[52] UteTribe Resolution, August 1982, photocopy in Indian Education Files, UTED.

[53] UteTribal Education Division, "Comprehensive Education Plan," 15, Indian Education Files, UTED.

[54] RogerBeckstead to Whom it May Concern, November 19, 1987, photocopy in Indian Education Files, EED.

[55] Ibid.

[56] Chapoose,"Title IV Counselor," Indian Education Files, UTED.

[57] Minutes,Title IV parent Advisory Committee Meeting, May 6, 1982, photocopy in Indian Education Files, EED.

[58] Ibid.

[59] Ibid.

[60] Ibid.

[61] Ibid.

[62] Ibid.

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION--UTE EDUCATION AND THE NEED TO REDEFINE AMERICAN EDUCATION

Federal Indian education policy went through many changes between 1900 and 1987, and the Uintah Basin felt the impact of all but one. From 1900 to the mid-1930s the federal government followed a policy of encouraging public-school enrollment in hopes that Indians would assimilate. In the mid-1930s, Indian Commissioner John Collier emphasized federal day schools and maintaining Indian traditions, but this policy had little or no impact in the Uinta Basin. Ute enrollment did increase in the 1930s as a result of stricter methods of determining tuition funding. During the era of termination in the late 1940s and through the 1950s, the federal government administered a policy of total assimilation. This policy fit in with the local residents' opinions of the Utes--they felt the Utes had to change their ways. The Utes hung on to their cultural identity, however, and they failed in the public schools throughout the 1950s and 1960s. The late 1960s and the 1970s saw the advent of self-determination, and Ute education leaders seized it with both hands. Parents, however, doubted the worth of the new programs and did not support Title IV programs. In the early 1980s, the Utes followed national Indian trends when they began to demand that they be in control of their children's education rather than just being advisors.

The Ute Indian children flunked and dropped out of school during all these programs. Why did all the programs fail to improve Ute achievement in public schools? The reason was that the Utes never had sufficient cause to trust the schools to help them improve their lives. In the 1920s and 1930s, the non-Indian residents of the Basin actively tried to keep the Indians out of the public schools. In the 1950s and 1960s, the school districts were hostile to Ute culture. In the late 1960s, a new generation came of age--a generation that was tired of being either ignored or ill-treated by the dominant culture. In the 1970s, these people developed special programs in the public schools to teach their children pride in being Utes. But the core curriculum did not change in the schools, and many remained unconvinced that schooling would help them have a better life on the reservation. Children continued to fail.

The recurring theme in this narrative is separateness. Neither culture in the Basin felt that the other had much to offer, and the two groups remained ignorant of each other and ignored each other whenever possible. Ute parents did not want their children to acquire a "white man's heart," and so they did not try to help their children succeed in school. The Utes disagreed with the way the local schools rewarded honor role students and those who did well in sports. Betty Jo Kramer wrote:

> Ute Parents have complained to me that they do not understand the underlying value. The reward should go to those who have tried hardest in every class and in every game, regardless of the final grade or score. In the arts, the school gives prizes based on the abstract qualities of the finished art work. According to Ute parents, the prize should be based on the intensity and satisfaction of the creative process. Clearly the school values which promote product and competition and the Ute values which encourage process and personal commitment are at odds.[1]

In the spring of 1988, one Indian leader mentioned that parents would rather have their children play hooky and fail than remain in a school system that was hostile to their Indian-ness.

Another reason the Indian children failed was that they were not prepared for school when they entered the system, and so the Ute children fell further behind each year. White culture and schooling interacted and supported each other long before non-Indian children entered school, so white children were prepared for the system. Non-Indian parents also had a higher level of education, and they generally believed their children would be well off if they were educated. The school's values reflected the home's, and what the children learned in school was reinforced at home. Indian parents, on the other hand, told their children school would do them no good.[2]

Perhaps one reason the children fell further behind as they progressed through the school years was that programs spent too much time addressing "special needs" for the educationally deprived. In 1974, the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare wrote the Uintah School District to ask why the district's Ute children, who composed ten percent of the total district's student population, made up fifty percent of those the school district classified as emotionally handicapped or retarded, and eighteen percent of those classified as emotionally disturbed, socially maladjusted, and slow learners. Unfortunately, no reply is on file. What the district did not seem to realize was that Indian students were not slow learners, but simply children of another culture who possessed a personal history of learning different from the average white child's.[3]

Wil Numkena, the Utah Special Assistant for Indian Education, wrote that traditional Indian learning methods included the use of modeling, observation, hands-on experience, and practical application applied on an individualized basis. Numkena stated that Indian children find didactic methods to be an unfamiliar experience. In 1955, Paul Hauk, a scholar from the University of Utah, found that the Utes possessed the same range of intelligence as other social groups in the Basin. But, Hauk wrote, Ute children often fail at tasks that demand rigorous attention to detail. Hauk felt the Utes tended to generalize and move on to the next task, learning as they went, skipping over fine details that may have enabled them to get it right the first time. This learning process developed during centuries of hunting and gathering which required quick decisions and the need to know something about everything. But these learning skills did not fit the mainstream school setting. In 1987, Forrest Cuch wrote that Ute culture emphasized process, self-evaluation, and cooperative economics, while non-Indian culture emphasized goals, the evaluation of others, and individual land ownership. Ute children are not unable to learn, they simply concentrate on learning in ways which do not translate into high math and English grades.[4]

Nonetheless, Ute children felt keenly their failure to succeed in school. According to one researcher, Indian students in the early 1970s were angry and openly hostile toward the school system. They felt discriminated against by white teachers and principals. The students also resented their parents' failure to care about their educational experiences. The children knew they were failing, but they lacked the skills needed to catch up. With Ute values pressing them from one side, and their failure to acquire mainstream education skills pressing them from the other, Ute students felt lost and many dropped out of school. In effect, the students were punished for being culturally different. Because they did not acquire the values of the mainstream culture,they were forced out of the system. Their cultural distinctness made them "culturally disadvantaged" in the school system's eyes.[5]

One weakness of educational programs for the "culturally disadvantaged" was related to the programs' focus. If a child failed English, did an "A" in a Ute culture class prepare him or her for high school? Several Indian leaders informally interviewed, at both the state and local level, expressed the feeling that the children need to master the basics by third grade if they are to be successful. But there has been a head-start program on the reservation since the 1960s and achievement has not improved. Does the attitude of the home outweigh the program, or does the program need to be in the formal school setting for the first three or four years so the children encounter intensified training?[6]

The federal government always claimed to be implementing policy that was in the Indians' best interests. Why did the Indians seem to go passively along instead of resisting more often? Yes, there was activism in the seventies, but many parents did not react at all. One reason was disillusionment and a feeling that nothing they did could make a difference anyhow. The Utes had lived through many educational changes, but their lives did not seem to improve. As Gloria Arrowchis said in 1982, the Utes got tired of waiting for things to get better.

Many Utes did not agree with the view that education necessarily improved their lives. "Uteness" determined tribal status rather than a high level of education. Indians judged each other by how well they knew the Ute language or the Ute culture. In other words, while whites saw education as the bridge to a better life and social status, the Utes did not.

But going passively along and purposely not getting involved may also be a form of protest against the federal government's policies. The Utes want to remain a separate nation, they do not want to integrate into the mainstream culture. Refusing to participate keeps them apart, which may be where they wish to remain. Politically, the tribe does not organize and bull its way into Basin politics because it does not want to be recognized as a minority group who has the same rights to a piece of the pie of American life as other minority groups do. The tribe wants to maintain federal recognition of itself as a politically separate, and sovereign, entity. Kramer observed, "for the Tribe, political success is maintaining its own institutions, not integrating into the county, state, or national system."[7]

The continuing attitude of racism in the local community functioned as another factor that made Utes feel that they could not improve their educational situation. Pre-World War II racism was fully documented in chapter I, and racism in the 1950s was documented in chapter II. But racism still occurs in the 1980s. Betty Jo Kramer wrote, "When a U. S. Senatorial candidate campaigned at Union High in September, 1982, a non-Indian student remarked that he would never get elected if he kept shaking hands with Indians."[8] Kramer wrote that a Mormon-non-Mormon friction exists between Utes and local residents as well. At a meeting of the Utah Department of Health held to introduce a general health curriculum into the schools to decrease heart disease and diabetes, a school principal said that those were Ute problems. He went on to say that the Indians would not "exercise their Free Agency to live a healthy life."[9] The state health promoter tried to mediate by telling the group that the Utes had not had access to basic health knowledge in the past, and many had lived in poverty for many years, increasing health risks. But the Utes remained silent until all the school officials left the room, and then an angry discussion took place. The Utes complained that they felt helpless when even a neutral subject such as health could not be discussed without references to race and religion.[10] In such an environment, the Utes seemed to have no choice but to withdraw.

But Ute feelings of helplessness can not be blamed on the local community alone. Federal legislation may increase Ute apathy as well. In many ways it provided the Indians with no authority to deal with problems they encountered at the local level. The Indian Education Act of 1972 provided for parent advisory committees but no Indian control of programs. The Indians could be forceful in their role as advisors, but the schools districts controlled the purse strings. Local school systems ultimately decided what was reasonable and possible--according to their standards. The policy supported the Indians' right to free speech but not necessarily self-determination. Roger Beckstead's letter of November 1987 about inaccurate record-keeping pointed out the fact that the federal government did not have measures to ensure that funds were being used efficiently and successfully.

Federal legislation also has made no attempt to change the core curriculum of school districts. Federal policy has acknowledged that curriculum should be changed, but again, legislation imposed no restrictions or penalties that the Indian tribes could use to improve the school districts' responses. Grant Drollinger mentioned that he did not like the fact that the Utes threatened to sue the school district if it did not act the way the Utes wanted. But the federal government itself has allowed the local school districts to have their way with "federal" programs. Federal "policy" has not been enforced. In 1986, the United States Department of Education audited the Indian education program in the Uintah school district, conducting an on-site visit complete with interviews. What did the auditor report? "...[A]dequate progress toward achieving the goals of the grant" was in evidence, and "acceptable evaluative procedures are being followed."[11] These findings were reported despite the fact that over half the Ute students in the district were failing a majority of their classes, and despite the fact that the next year Roger Beckstead felt compelled to note that the records kept were inaccurate and inadequate for evaluation to take place. Where is the incentive for the school district to follow federal policy if the federal government acts as a rubber stamp?

The Utes' experiences with the public school system in the twentieth century have caused them to want to remain separate from it. Because of continuing hostility toward their culture both in school and out, the Utes did not want to integrate with the local community. Many Utes had lost faith in formal education, and those leaders who did feel education was important supported programs such as the Ute history class and Ute language programs which emphasized differentness. Some of these Ute leaders wanted the programs to be expanded to include non-Indian students in order to teach non-Indians to respect Ute culture. However, Ute parents, for the most part, did not want the non-Indians associated with special programs for Indian students. The school district treated the programs as separate satellites, and the Ute parents wanted that attitude to continue.

Federal legislation has not supported Ute goals. When legislation has swung to assimilation, as in the 1920s and the 1950s, the Utes have resisted it in their efforts to remain a culturally-distinct group. When the pendulum has swung toward self-determination, as in the 1930s or the 1970s and 1980s, federal intentions have not had their full impact in the Basin. The government today ostensibly supports goals of Indian self-determination and cultural pride, but federal legislation alone has failed to bring this to pass.

Beyond the ineffectiveness of federal legislation, this case study of Indian education in the Uinta Basin raises larger questions. Examining problems associated with multicultural education runs deeper than simply describing racism in the school setting. The treatment of the Ute people in the two Basin school districts reveals that America needs to redefine the concept of education.

Education has a basic definition that is similar in any society. The goal of education is to teach the young to live in their society. Education perpetuates a system and holds it together by training young people to be responsible citizens.

But educational systems which teach the young only to know and preserve their own culture is invalid in today's complex world. The world has changed greatly in the past century because communication and transportation technology have proceeded at an explosive pace. People can now reach any point on the globe; a resident of New York can speak to a resident of Johannesburg nearly as easily as he or she can speak to a resident of Boston. However, communication often remains poor because of the walls built by cultural differences. Advancements in interpersonal and intercultural communication have lagged behind technology, which decreases physical barriers.

Traditional education does not decrease these communication barriers because it is often nationalistic. Education exists to ensure the survival of a culture or a country. Americans believe they are the leaders of the world in freedom and democracy, so American schools teach children that the American value system is the best way of thinking. But if Americans remain convinced that they have the only right answers, then they fail to listen closely to what other cultures have to say.

The treatment of the Ute Indians in the Uinta Basin is a microcosm of the troubles nationalistic education can cause. Lessons which could be taught through learning Indian history, art, government, and social systems are not allowed to taint the core curriculum. Apparently it would serve no useful purpose to learn about Indian values because, according to white local residents, they are the wrong values. Indian values are relegated to a separate sphere. Because whites do not want to learn about Indians (and Indians do not want to learn about the whites), the two dominant groups in the Basin ignore each other whenever possible and remain largely ignorant of each other. Poor communication keeps them from pooling their educational, economic, or political resources.

This attitude of separateness parallels American relations with third world countries and communist powers. For instance, communication between cultures is lost in misunderstandings perpetuated by educational systems that teach American children (or Soviet children) that the Soviet Union (or the United States) has an inferior way of life. Rather than combining to combat such threats as the danger nuclear development poses to the environment or the danger third-world overpopulation and hunger poses to the peoples of the world, the United States and the Soviet Union battle over whose governmental system is morally correct.

And in the case of teaching about Soviets in the schools, and non-teaching about the Indians, the traditional American education sanctions the belief that other cultures are inferior. American children (non-Indian and Indian) learn that Indians are savages incapable of attaining civilization and that Soviets are unreasonable robots incapable of thinking of anything but world domination. Without understanding the cultural and historical background of the two groups, conflict between each of them and America is inevitable. One conflict harms the self image of succeeding generations of Ute Indian children, and the other conflict has led to the threat of nuclear war. In a complex, interconnected world, education for world citizenship should supplant education for national citizenship.

Despite the fact that the above kind of conflict renders federal Indian education policy ineffective when it appears at the local level, Indian education legislation has been a small step in the right direction. A policy of self-determination at least gives minority cultures legal sanction to maintain cultural identity. But the policy's implementation makes it a much lesser step forward than it could be. Communication between Indians and whites has not improved, and they fail to understand each other. At the local level, American education is narrowly nationalistic in its suppression of other cultures' values. The education of Indians, and indeed of whites, blacks, Asians, Hispanics, and others, can not improve until the goal of American education changes.

Notes

[1] Betty Jo Kramer, "The Dismal Record Continues: The Ute Indian Tribe and the School System," Ethnic Groups, 5 (1983), 162-63.

[2] Connor Chapoose, oral interview, August 22, 1960. Duke Interview #5, Duke Oral History Collection, Marriott Library, Special Collections, University of Utah, Salt Lake City.

[3] Gilbert D. Roman, Director of the Office of Civil Rights to Ashel J. Evans, Superintendent of the Uintah School District, November 22, 1975; photocopy in the Indian Education Files, Office of the Education Coordinator, Ute Tribal Education Division, Ft. Duchesne, Utah (hereafter cited as UTED).

[4] Wil Numkena, "A Report on Indian Education," (1980), 2; ibid. (1981), 2; photocopy in the Indian Education Files, Office of the Special Assistant for Indian Education, Utah State Board of Education, Salt Lake City (hereafter cited as USBE). Forrest Cuch, "Cultural Perspectives on Indian Education: A Comparative Analysis of the Ute and Anglo Cultures," Equity and Excellence, 23 (Spring 1987), 65; Paul A. Hauk, "Ute Rorschach Performances and Some Notes on Field Problems and Methods," University of Utah, Anthropological Papers, no. 15, February 1953, 1-10.

[5] Lynn Raveston, "Human Relations and Leadership Development Program," unpublished report, 1973, 30-34, photocopy in Indian Education Files, UTED.

[6] According to Norma Denver, there was a reading program run under Title I in the mid-1970s. It was discontinued, and no basic skills program exists today at Todd Elementary and West Jr. High where the majority of Utes attend school. In the 1980s, there was a basic skills tutor at Vernal Junior High under Title IV. But Vernal Junior High is twenty-two miles from Todd Elementary, and most of the Indian students who attend in Vernal are Navajos in the Mormon Indian Placement Program. See Title IV Part A applications for the years 1983, 1984, and 1988; photocopies in the Indian Education Files, Office of the Elementary Education Director, Uintah School District, Vernal, Utah (hereafter cited as EED).

[7] Kramer, "The Dismal Record Continues," 164.

[8] Ibid., 159.

[9] Ibid., 160.

[10] Ibid.

[11] Hakim Khan, Acting Director of Indian Education to Phillip E. Ellis, Superintendent, April 23, 1986, photocopy in Indian Education Files, EED.

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APPENDIXES

Appendix A

Bob Chapoose - Interview*

by Kim Gruenwald

April 14, 1988

Gruenwald: First of all Mr. Chapoose I just want to ask you what has been your position with the Indian education in the basin in the past and what is it now?

Chapoose: My position with education is that I was one of the first Indian students to graduate from Union High School and during that period of time is that education has become a different thing to me than the old traditional type of school because as I went to college and went into military and then going back to college again then working directly with the Indian people, it's, I find out that there's a lot of problems related to the Indian in today's society's educational system. I've worked as a counselor both, I worked with the Union and tribe dealing with employment education and economic development. Then I also worked as a counselor at Dixie College, Weber State, and at the Ibpahpont Indian Reservation and now I'm back here at the Uintah basin as a counselor at a Jr. High school which is entirely different than working with the tribe in

*All the Indian interviewees preferred Uintah to always be spelled with the "h." The cassette tape of this interview is in the possession of the interviewer.

relationship with their education as they - you work with all phases of education, you work with elementary schools, secondary schools, college and vocational schools. One year while I was at Dixie College I worked with a program called Upward Bound which was to help motivate young students coming in from low income families to get their education and that there were funds available to them through the pell program to get them on to college. At Weber State I was dealing directly with academic counseling and there is a different basis with that too, in relationship with what it's all about. Then now when you're working with Jr. High students it's entirely different because these kids are trying to find their place in society.

Gruenwald: What's it like working with them? What kind of stuff do you have to counsel them on as Indians?

Chapoose: In Indians I think that we're living in an era where it's a global interest. They watch the news, they know what's happening in far east. They know what's happening with Russia. They are aware of the things that are global issues. And in turn when you deal with them is that they're being aware of these things. But yet they're not aware of their own educational system. They haven't found out who they are because we're leaning more towards the total social values. We're losing a lot of our tradition, culture, language, and social values so in turn we, when I counsel young Indian people this is what I'm trying to tell them. I'm trying to make them understand or identify who they are and it's really difficult because I've had to go find relatives here in this school and then you say "Hey, that's your cousin!" "He is?" And it is a strange thing really because when I was growing up I knew who my relatives were. And I knew who could punish me and who couldn't. And here we don't have that. Everybody has their own click, they have their own, they stay in their place and they do their thing together and that's it. And this makes it difficult because you're trying to talk with them on what's happening.

Gruenwald: What was the public school system like in the basin when you went through it?

Chapoose: I guess it was - we had some Indian kids that did go to public school but they were helped. I mean it was almost one-to-one when they--I went to boarding school and then in between I think it was my third and fourth grade year I went to school over in Tridel to a public school.

Gruenwald: What was the boarding school like?

Chapoose: The boarding school was military like. Everything was done according to military standards. During the day--it's best to start out in the morning--o.k. They woke us up at five o'clock in the morning. We had to follow out in formation. And they had a roll call. They didn't care when it was, winter, fall, spring, cold, it didn't matter whether it was raining or not. We'd fall out, then we'd go back in and make our beds. I know these things because I was in the military. So everything relates back to that. And then we had to go back in and make our beds and make sure that they were, the bed was square-that you could bounce a quarter off of it. This is the way that they wanted us to. Our shoes were polished. Our clothes-we had to wear clean clothes all of the time. And depending on which adolescent level you were at was what you wore. And we-after we got, went back and made our beds then we'd go back down stairs, wash up, and fall out for formation, have another roll call to make sure everybody was there then they'd march us over to the restaurant or whatever - cafeteria. And then we'd walk in, we'd get our plates, we had to wait until everybody got in, and until everybody was waited on, then we'd stand at our tables. And then there was a priest that would come and give a prayer. Then we'd sit down. The older students usually sat at the end of the tables and one would serve the food as the tray would go around the table. Then the other one [student] on the other end would serve the drinks. And then after they were through, then they would go up, like during lunch, they would go up there and pick up. And also for dinner they would pick up the desert and serve it out to us. And after we got through we would go back over the school, I mean back over the dormitories. We really didn't have much time to play. And then we would go in and get everything all ready for school. And then we would fall out in formation before school--about 15 minutes before school and then they'd march us to school. And then in there, in school we learned about society's cultures. We learned how to sing Greek songs, Italian songs, English songs, we learned their dances, we learned all about them. And also what we learned were the social values; to open doors for girls, to say thank you, please this, yes ma'am, no ma'am. And we were taught I guess the standing social values of life. The way the middle class white would want it and that's what we were taught. I didn't know how to speak English when I went to school. We were disciplined because we spoke our own native language. We were locked up in rooms and we were harshly disciplined. We were beat? I ran away from school several times. But when I went to public school it was different. The teachers there kind of gave me more help than I really needed. They were, I guess, conscious, maybe the empathy for me to acculturate and to learn was there main thing because I was the only Indian student in the third grade level. So I had all the help that I could receive. It's like our programs now. We have all kinds of programs to help Indian kids. But they were more--I guess they--I don't know if they felt sorry for me or what it was because they really helped me. Then when I went back to boarding school the following year they upped me one whole grade because I had learned more about social values than ever before. But I found in the public school, the schools were, of course, reading, writing and arithmetic. The old thing, rather than opening doors and saying thank you and pass this. We didn't have the stringent military type of environment in the public schools. And then I also went to public school over in Ballard and that was the same thing there too was they helped me all they could, the teachers did. And when I went back to boarding school again they upped me one full grade.

Gruenwald: When was this, right before or close the 40s

Chapoose: In the 40s. Yes, that's when I went to school. I remember the second world war. I remember some of the guys that went school who were beyond 18 years of age were about 20, 21, 22 years of age that were still going to school that were drafted into the military or they volunteered. Our boys advisor was an Indian fellow who went into the military. He was called into the navy. He had two german shepherds that were in the corp (the dogs). Then while he was in the military one of them was killed and the other one was wounded. One received a purple heart and the other was kind of (unknown word) because he was killed in action. I remember that. But that was the difference between the two schools. And then the older you got in boarding school--and also in boarding school we had detail. When you were little you picked up and policed around the area. And we had a lot of that whole area up there to police around. So we'd get on end and the girls would get on the other and we'd police the area. And then the older, like I said, the next stage we got into we had to take care of the dairy farm. We fed our cows. We had our--the school was self-sustaining. We had our own pigs and sheep and cattle and milk cows and stuff like that. The older you got--I remember milking cows. We had to weigh all the buckets. They were registered Hereford cattle, I mean Holsteins. So we weighed everything. What I liked about that was when we'd pour the milk through the cooler and they'd come out on the other end it was ice-cold. There was a natural spring there and the milk we would put through separators. And there was a big dipper and we'd stick that when the cream came out, we'd stick it underneath the cooler and when the milk came out we thought that was the best drink. Then I got involved in--I wrote down a lot of things I did when I was going to school and I could probably go on and on and talk about something. But they had the scouting program. I was in the cub scouts, I was in the boy scouts. When I was in the boy scouts I had an opportunity to go the days of `47 and I went to--the freedom tour came through and I had the opportunity to go see the freedom tour train in Provo. I was also involved in a lot of scouting activities. So it kind of helped me to be in the boy scouts. And then they had a 4-H club. I raised four steers, and did two different stock shows and sold my cattle and sold my cows and that's how I got my cattle started. We did have a lot of (unknown word) into the acculturating, into the social values. It was interesting. Now we don't have that because everybody is pushing towards this so-called education. It's maybe because we're being pushed into something that a lot of kids. are not prepared for it because of the social, I mean right now everything is academic.

Gruenwald: Do you think that they need more social strength,--of the same type you received?

Chapoose: So I think they need more social strength. Right, yes. I think because maybe the social values even in today's world are deteriorating. And I think that's probably one of the reasons why.

Gruenwald: What grades did you spend in public schools and what grades did you spend in the boarding school?

Chapoose: I spent the third grade, I spend the first, second in boarding school. I spent the third grade and then they upped me one grade so I was in the fifth grade. Then I went to sixth grade and they upped me one grade so I was in the eight grade so two of my years were--my third grade I was in public school and seventh grade was when I was in public school.

Gruenwald: So you spent most of your time in boarding school?

Chapoose: Yes.

Gruenwald: What kind of problems were caused by the transition form when they closed down a boarding school?

Chapoose: One of the things was that in schools at that period of time there was really no age limit on when you graduated from high school. I remember when I was going to high school we had fellows that were 21 years of age that were just getting their high school diplomas. But since then the state has said you've got to be 18. You don't get anymore after you're 18 years of age. So I think that transition makes a difference because in this school we have kids that are not ready to go into high school. But because of the age limit they have to go. And I think if they stayed here one more year, an extra year instead of the three years rather than saying, well your such-and - such an age and you can't stay here anymore, if they would understand they're ready to go then. But we sent to high school failures from our school.

Gruenwald: What other kind of problems--what was education like in the 50's for the Indians when they closed it down and sent them off to public school? What kind of changes did they see?

Chapoose: Well, the bigger change that I saw was that we were not really accepted into the public schools. There was a lot of fighting going on between the Indians and the non-Indians and being accepted by them was one of the biggest things because I fought all the way through high school, 10th, 11th and 12th grade.

Gruenwald: What was Indian education like in the 60s?

Chapoose: The Indian education in the 60's, well there was a really -- the educational system in that time was at the lowest point where the kids went to school. And that was all there was to it. And then when the civil rights movement was coming around the Indians (I was an advocate for the Indians during the civil rights movement) and I remember the things that I went through. This was some of the things that I had to testify before congress on was the Indian has right to go to school and to get accepted into all schools. The schools are not set up for one group of people because now the integration is starting to come in because we were taken from our schools and put into public schools. I had to make the transition, I had to show the people that Indians were able to do could go to school and do the things that they wanted do. And a lot of our Indian people, they withdrew when this happened and I remember visiting a lot of schools - Indian reservations and they were complaining about the way white people was treating them at schools. They did not understand the total curriculum. They did not understand what they were getting themselves into. They said, well it was like English...I remember what it was like when I took English in boarding school. I had an English teacher that was an Okie and an English teacher that was a German, and an English teacher that was English, and a teacher from Boston, so we spoke with different accents and every time a new teacher moved the new teacher would say "no, that's not that way you speak", so we spoke with an Oki accent. Then the next year the German teacher came over there and he said "no, you can't speak that way because your speaking with an accent", so you speak this way so when I went to boarding school, I mean when I went to public school I found out that I was speaking with the wrong accent. And it was confusing too because they'd say you're speaking wrong, you're speaking wrong, and everything that we did was wrong. And so in the 60's when the revolution came up with employment and Indians being involved in civil rights, I thought back to myself and I went back and talked with the old folk and they said "we have a language" and this was the thing that came out during the time was we have a right to our language. We have language overall and we pushed for our native language to be taught in schools and like I said it had to go before congress for them people to accept and say "o.k. you can have these things in school". Even in boarding school we couldn't speak our native language. So when that happened and then the transition came back was Hey it is right to have the opportunity to speak your own native language.

Gruenwald: So what was Indian education like in the basin in the 70s--they'd passed this transitional point.

Chapoose: Well, and then what happened in the 70s after the people, the federal government says they need help with education because statistics began to come out during that period of the early 60s to the late 60s and 70s.

Gruenwald: Kennedy report.

Chapoose: Right, yes, and he was really understanding to the plight of the minority. And more so to the Indians. I think that he was an advocate for the Indians. I remember him real well, I liked that man. I met him in--one time he landed in--he came to Salt Lake and he landed at the airport. And I was standing about three people back. And he came over and I had my son on my shoulder and my wife standing on the side of me and another little son. The were just little kids at that time and he reached across the people and said "Hi Bob", and I introduced him to my family. He knew me and I knew him.

Gruenwald: That was John or Robert?

Chapoose: That was John. I knew both of them but I knew John a lot better than I did Robert. But anyway, when I went to talk with him, you know, with Indian education, with a group of Indian people he would listen and he would say O.K. what can we do to correct these things. That was the president we was talking with so when we went to congress he was there. He was there at the meeting we went to and he would put his input and say yes this is what needs to be done. And this is when all of these federal programs came out for minorities and there was a lot of programs for Indians - not only in education but also in economic development.

Gruenwald: What's happened in the late 70s and the 80s now so far? Has it changed again or is it still growing?

Chapoose: It is changing because now what's happened is that they say well we're withdrawing funds from you and a lot of these programs are going down. And in turn congress is not looking to help the Indian anymore in relation with economic development, education, you know the total picture, cause what the Indian was really getting. So now we're in a different era. We`ve taken a step back. It's the new administration that's not supporting the Indian people. So in turn we can't holler discrimination anymore because our civil rights office almost closed down and we can't go to them for help anymore. It seems like they broke us up so that we can't be together anymore.

Gruenwald: Broke it up into what?

Chapoose: Broke it up into different placements and different positions and groups and our advocates for the Indian people that were once bound together in groups whenever we went to test flight before congress or all of these programs. We could go as a group together and now we can't do that anymore because they say well you have to get - you loose a days work here whereas we able to go and do the things we wanted to do.

Gruenwald: So the bureaucracy has caught up with you.

Chapoose: So we're back in the same boat, as we were in the late 50s. We've got start over again.

Gruenwald: For the Ute Indian Children in this school what do you think motivates them the most as Indians to succeed here and what do you think holds them back?

Chapoose: There's--success is really low and I think it's because the low self-image that they see of themselves. And it's because the society that we live in right here in the basin area they look down upon the Indians, the state looks down upon the Indian as a person that's in the way, this is going back to the early years when the white people first got here and they said that the Indian is in the way. It's hampering progress and its back to that type of environment that we're living in. And a lot of the, like I said, the academic world now we're looking at academics rather than what can we do to help this person. And I see the administration in the same way. They're not here to help us. What they're trying to do is make us a middle-class white. They're trying to make me a white. They're trying to make all of these Indian kids here a white person rather than saying "hey, you are Indians. We will try to help you upgrade your values, your standards, so that you can compete in this world" because our tribe is a corporation just like General Electric just like AT&T, IBM, it's a corporation like that and we have the schools in the 60's that said "Hey, we need teachers, we need social workers, we need psychologists, we need geologists. We`re going to help you train them through our educational system." This is one reason why the federal fund came in. But a lot of the states did not utilize the funds for that type of thing. Instead they used it for their own benefit. And the money that was supposed to have gone out to the Indian people to help them to develop these things did not really come out.

Gruenwald: What do you think it was used for instead?

Chapoose: You know statistics show that about 90% of it was used for administrative costs so when you look at 10% that goes out to the people that really need it - it just doesn't work.

Gruenwald: It almost seems to me that that's become the

American system. I mean the Bureaucracy, the administration of everything. (unknown word) for everything and then nobody's getting anything except-- it's all for staff positions, and buildings--

Chapoose: And all the equipment. That's one of the things that we saw, that I saw when I was working with the economic development program. And I tried to maintain a low staff. And just like our tribe we had a budget of 20,000,000 dollars and I'd probably say maybe 18,000,000 of it went to administrative cost to all of the people that are employed down there--their travel, their equipment--

Gruenwald: Insurance--

Chapoose: --then the 10,000,000 goes out to the depot and they can't figure out what's wrong. They don't understand economics. And the (unknown word) shop is really interesting because it talked about three people and they were flying over on the airplane and it's all ground down there and there is this Japanese fellow that says look at all that money down there. He saw a lot of things that he could build and --because they're that kind of people. They see money no matter what they look at. And then this American, I mean this white person riding on the airplane, he looked down there and he says "look! lots!", (building lots) because that's what he saw. The Indian looked down there and says "Lease it!" and that's your point of view on profit. The profit is leasing your land. That's profit to them rather than seeing something productive come out of it. And this is the way the Indian people really look at things. They don't look at things in millions or hundreds or thousands of dollars.

Gruenwald: How have Ute parents reacted to the programs? Have they been supportive? What have they been doing?

Chapoose: During the 70s we had a lot of parental support and now the parents have to take a leave of absence in order to attend meetings. And I think that's a discouragement to the parents that really want to help. And even to come up here to the school and visit the administration because of the problems that the children are having, the students are having, they can't come up unless they take an absent leave. And I don't think that is right. As a parent I've got one more child left in school. But I remember where I worked at when my boys were going to high school. I'd go up to my supervisor and say "my kids have got some problems in school. I'd like to go down and talk to the administrator." And he'd say "go ahead." And he would say "when you come back let me know." That`s what he'd say. So I'd go down to--my kids went to different elementary schools but when we moved down to Granger they all went to Stansberry Elementary school, to Westlake Jr. High and then to Granger High School. So in turn I could go down there and talk to the administrators or teachers and find out how my kids--why they were doing these things. And I wasn't penalized because that my boss know that I was interested in my children's education. But when you have to sign up for annual leave and administrative leave and some of the parents don't have annual leave accumulated, so in turn you loose two or three hours a day.

Gruenwald: But parents can get involved in other ways can't they? There must be ways to get involved, or be supportive of with out taking--I mean because everybody would face that.

Chapoose: The parents, at one time, were supportive but I think because of our extra-curricular activities like bowling and basketball and all that a lot of our parents do participate in that thing. So in turn that's where they go. So the educational system for the Indian student is not there. In the urban level, urban areas, it's different. They're supportive because even though they are involved in things like this they do attend - I remember living in Salt Lake, and I guess I've been in public education longer than I have now but I remember a lot of the parents that were working they had over 80-90 people maybe 100 there.

Gruenwald: Why is that difference between urban and rural do you think?

Chapoose: I think because they`re in a setting where they can, where they see themselves working on the same level as the white people. I don't use that point lightly but it's not Indian. And they have to compete and also in the urban area you have students that are on the placement program, we have kids that have grown up in the urban areas, and they're more progressive. Whereas on the reservations, I'm not saying they're not progressing, but I think they've become too traditional. So in turn their values are different. And when you see these kids that way there's really no explanation for it on what should really be done. But that's the difference between the urban and the reservation. And I think they're structured more into what education's all about. And they seem to care where their kids are. And besides that they go to church without being discriminated against, they have social functions. All of these things and there's no discrimination. It's there but they don't see it.

Gruenwald: Another thing I wanted to ask you about was the teachers out here in the Uintah basin. How supportive do you think they are of the Indian children?

Chapoose: Well, they're somewhat supportive. I would say that they're always complaining about the Indian students. The Indian student--we can't make him do this. We can't make him do that. We can't force him to do--you know, going back to the old traditional American school of homework, research papers, exams, and grades. This is what they want. A lot of our--if they wouldn't complain so much I think they'd get a lot more done but they complain about things too much and they are picky about the things that their students want and at times I get so disgusted because we have a program called the Ute history class. We've never failed the students. The kids use all of these things; they do homework, research, they do a fantastic job yet when they come into the regular classroom they don't do anything. So what's wrong. It isn't because we work one-to-one on them. We don't baby them. You ought to see the papers that they turn in. It's interesting to note that one student in a class setting can't accomplish what they want to in here.

Gruenwald: What are the teachers grading them down on their papers?

Chapoose: Well, most of it is--I find out that the grading system here is on points. They get so many points for research or assignment papers, tests and stuff like this and we had one Indian girl that would receive very low scores on her assignment that she turned in. But what she used to do was do extra assignments. So her points were above the required number of points. So there was only one alternative and that was for the teacher to give that student an "A". So I don't think there is any--when you are in the counseling position you take a student that is having problems and they come into you and you resolve the problem and you see a different student out there later on. You'll see a student that's doing really good, doing an outstanding job, going out for the queen contest or dancing up there with their traditional clothing on. You see a different person. You see a different attitudinal change, and behavioral change. And this is what I look for in my counseling when I talk with my students. And none of that is taken into consideration in the classroom. The behavioral change in the student is not observed. All they are looking for is "you be quite! and we do the talking. I asked you a question, now you answer me." And this type of paraphrase. And the Indian kid is afraid to make a mistake.

Gruenwald: So is that why they don't seem to relate well to that kind of system do you think? Because they're afraid to make mistakes?

Chapoose: Yes. So in turn, when you are afraid to make a mistake, then when the teacher asks you and you don't respond then they say your a dummy.

Gruenwald: If they make a mistake the same thing happens, that's why they're afraid to make it. One more thing I wanted to ask you about was, actually, before I do that, I was talking to Venita the other day and she said that since the bilingual program was in here the kids that went through it for three years or six years, some of them had been more involved in leadership, more involved in getting into things, there self-esteem has been better. Have you observed that?

Chapoose: Yes. One of the things that comes about these things is that you feel better about yourself. You feel comfortable with you surroundings. You're able to stand up and say "Hey, at least I can talk my native language and I can do things that are going on." And you stop to think one of the things that--(unknown word) I've read here was that I told you about the traditional American school. The other one is that I'm working here and society is hung up on credentials. Just like your (unknown word) You're doing the same thing. And if you don't have these credentials you can't get where you're going. And the other one is that in the 80s right now is that we're hung up on kids that are going to go to college. If the principal does not send a student from Jr. high into High school, on to college it is a failure for him. The other one is that society--the kids here are pressured against getting and completing education.

Gruenwald: By who?

Chapoose: By the community.

Gruenwald: Which part of the community do you think?

Chapoose: And I think it's mostly the--well, I see it with our personnel committee. When an Indian comes in looking for a job and he does not have/has not achieved a high school diploma he's automatically out. And then any other job that comes about is that they say you've got to have a college degree. I mean these are on positions that are advertised by the Ute tribe where before they never were. We know that society demands these things--the Indian people do. But when you look at your own society and they do these things that's a lot of pressure on you. And those people that don't have these things think it's wrong and it shows in the students themselves because they say "Well, my dad doesn't have this and this is what's going on with him and he's being discriminated against." You know, these kids know what discrimination is. So that's what's happened. They've withdrawn. They don't want to--and the other one is that society guarantees everything. They guarantee speech, they guarantee education, (unknown words) all of these things. What I mean by school is that you've got to guarantee it on a check. When you go to school you've got to get a guarantee loan, a student guarantee loan. And this is all done in the school except Indian schools. We don't guarantee the student to progress. It is not guaranteed. We believe in a failure system in education. Because we believe in a set of standards. This standard is to only work with achievers. The failures are automatically put in, I mean this morning I was talking with John and talking about the math test and he said "our students failed it." And we can do these things. We can set up a set of rules and regulations where everybody fails. Or we can make sure that a certain group fails. And then we work with achievers. We don't work with students who are having problems. No. Cause we say "Well, they are not worth working with, we're going to work with these achievers." So we have a talent program and these are the ones that go on. These are the ones that we adhere to when we get into the classrooms these are the ones that are asked because they know who are in this talent class. They know who they are--the teachers do. So in turn that's what happens.

Gruenwald: The last thing I wanted to ask you about was despite the fact that we have all these special programs at West and Todd, the Ute history, the bilingual at one time or another, you know and maybe that helps their self-image, they still go over to Union High school and drop out. What happens between those two schools?

Chapoose: What happens in relationship with something like that is that we have two different sets of groups of people. This is the way I look at it. This is the way I perceive it. It's not what somebody else told me. This is what I see, is that an Indian student is labeled a failure to begin with no matter what he's done here at Jr. high school or what kind of--he may be a straight "A" student. Going back to this failure system, is that they're expectation--I had a daughter go over there from here. A good athlete but because the P.E. teacher said she was slow, here talents were not taken into consideration in her ability at participating in sports. She's played competitive basket ball ever since she was 13 for the recreational. She's played against girls that were up in their 30's and she's played in tournaments but they never did take that into consideration. And the thing that they labeled her with was "you're too slow." And with that kind of degradation of her character she just completely quite and she just about quite school. But her brothers and her mom and myself and her relatives, they (unknown word) go to school. Achieve what you want. You've already come this far. So any Indian student that goes from here whether they have talents or whether they have good grades is already labeled a failure over there anyway so that's what they go over their with--the image that they are failures.

Gruenwald: Why do you think that there's this big difference between the attitude here and the attitude over there?

Chapoose: I think it's because there's somebody that cares. I mean I'm an advocate for Indian. And in turn, I speak up in behalf of the Indian. When parents come here I speak Ute to them. In their meeting with the administration. I in turn interpret what the administration is saying to the parent because they're in English. The parent in turn talks to me in Ute and I explain it back to the administrator what the parents are feeling. And I think the parents acknowledge that there is help here. And their involvement with this school is that they're here. They see somebody here that is going to help their student. When they go to Union High school they don't have this. They've got the JOM program there but because they're most generally non-Indians their perception of education is, like I said going back to the traditional system. You've got to keep your grades up. You've got to have your research, you've got to have all of these things. They support that rather than trying to help the Indian students understand that they have to turn these things in and support them in whatever they're trying to do. So it's just like-one of the students from Union High school came over and told he was called a bad name. And I said "Did you report that to the principal?" And he said "They don't listen to me." So when the main calling comes in from the teachers to students it doesn't sound good. Whereas here we call the teacher in and say "Is that what you said?" That's the difference. And one of the things that our education in the 80s dealt with is the educational cop-outs; Individualized instructions, self-paced instructions, accountability, phrase contracts, in-service meetings, after-school meetings, curriculum groups, summer committee, summer school. This is what happened in the 70s because of the federal funds that were there and we were able to pay parents mileage for attending and the got the money. That was one the their incentives. Now we don't have that. We've got some of them but not--

Gruenwald: Just because of the drop off of federal funding?

Chapoose: Right.

Gruenwald: What do you think will happen with who gets elected president and what do you see in the future? What if Bush gets elected? What if Dukakis gets elected? I see, I kind of read up on politics and as long as we have a strong body of republicans we won't get these federal fundings. And if we have a high majority of democrats that take into our government then we'll again go back to these programs.

Gruenwald: Yes, but even if there is a bunch of democrats do you think the Indians are going to have to start all over again with drawing the governments attention back to programs?

Chapoose: I think we need to. I think we need to really get down and go back to our--because we are a society within a society. We're a nation within a nation. And we need to go back and let people know that we have a right as a nation to be able to receive funding directly to help us improve what we've got. We've got over four million acres of land here and the only thing that we're looking at is oil and yet we have a lot of resources out there that is not even being (unknown word). And we need these schools to look and see how they can help the Indian tribe to come up with people that are geologists, that are doctors, that are psychologists, that are counselors, that are all the different phases of professionalism but they won't. They won't set up the curriculum that way. This curriculum that we're dealing with is research papers that don't mean anything, grading systems that can be flexible. We're not helping.

Gruenwald: What kind of curriculum do you think is needed?

Chapoose: I think one of the big things in curriculum is that you've got to show these kids where these things fit in their lives. Like when we had the Upward Bound program. We had math classes but we showed them where math was used. In architect, in engineering, in chemistry, they saw these things. And these kids, their grades went up. That was one of the things I saw was that their grades went up. I saw them go on to college. I see these same kids now, they're kids I call them, but they had their own businesses, they had their own professions, they're working in the fields that they chose. And these were Upward Bound students. And whenever I attend conferences I see these people and yet when we don't have these things for them there's no growth. Right now we're stale-mate. Indian kids, they don't care so in turn what they do is they revert into drugs and into alcohol to offset their educational needs and goals. We have some that are progressing, yes. I have kids that are in the 3.0 and above GPA. We had 30 of them this last time. Then, when you look at them when they go to high school what's going to happen?

Gruenwald: O.K. those are all of the questions I had. Is there anything more to add that we didn't get to or cover?

Chapoose: Well, I think I've pretty well covered what I wanted to do, but when you look at the Indian I don't think that your interview really gives him the due credit that's due him.

Gruenwald: You mean the Indian community or the anglo community?

Chapoose: The anglo community. The anglo community does not know that we are supporting the community that we live in.

Gruenwald: So there is a communication gap.

Chapoose: See, we pour into this community maybe over one-hundred million dollars annually, maybe more in money.

Appendix B

Forrest Cuch - Interview*

By Kim Gruenwald

April 7, 1988

Gruenwald: First of all, what has been your position in Ute education? I mean what's your tie to the education division; what's it been in the past and what is it now?

Cuch: I've been the education director for the Ute Indian tribe for the past 14 years. My relationship with the school districts has been that I've been an advisor to the school districts concerning the education of Ute children.

Gruenwald: How would you characterize Indian education in the basin in the 1970s, the 1980s; how do you think it's developed over that time; how's it changed?

Cuch: The 1970s was a period of awakening, a change. Although we were a little bit behind other tribes in some ways, as far as bringing attention to the existence of Indian education--that there was a culturally appropriate way to educate Indian children--we were quite as involved

*This transcript has been edited by the interviewee. A complete copy of the transcript and the cassette tape is in the possession of the interviewer.

as with any other tribe. So the 70s is characterized as a period of awakening. The beginning of what is coined as Indian control in Indian education programs. The 1980s represents two things happening. It's kind of a dichotomy. In one sense there's a refinement of what was initiated in the 70s but at the same time there's been a conservative wave that's been operating throughout the country and it reflects a return to assimilation. It's kind of a conservative position, a kind of return to the basics orientation. So the 80s is characterized by both a refinement and by a return to the old 50s philosophy.

Gruenwald: Now this return to conservativism both from non-Indians and Indians? I mean has the Ute tribe done that too?

Cuch: Yes, both, within both groups. More-so in the anglo community than our own but never-the-less the leadership, I believe, of the tribe has been affected and influenced by the dominant culture and it's political attitude. Now our office and programs have resisted this change or return to the 50s. We strongly resisted it. But there has been some changes here.

Gruenwald: To kind of get going on the Ute children in the school, what do you think motivates them to succeed in the school?

Cuch: What motivates Ute children to succeed in school is largely what motivates any child to succeed in school and that is for those children to feel accepted socially and appreciated and to feel a sense of worth--self-worth. In other words, a high self-esteem motivates young people to learn. With a regard to Ute children, as with any other child, their culture needs to be reflected in the school setting. With regard to Ute children I'm talking about a Ute-culturally-appropriate education. There needs to be not only Ute teachers but an Indian curriculum, the Ute language, the Ute history, stories and legends, lore--all of these things need to be taught in the school as well.

Gruenwald: How much curriculum is in the school right now? Just the one Ute history class?

Cuch: Yes, there's very little curriculum in the schools at the present time but we're gearing up. Over the last, during the 70s and 80s we've been gearing up. We've been training teachers, we've been developing material and we've been trying to expand the Ute cultural programs in our schools. Hopefully in the near future there will be a greater impact in this area.

Gruenwald: What seems to be holding the Ute children back? Why are so many failing? Do you think it's the environment or the school system?

Cuch: It's a lot of things. I've already indicated that our schools are not culturally appropriate. They never have been. There's been an incongruence between how young people feel and are treated and live in the home as compared to how they're treated and how live in the school. The goal should be to minimize the difference there and eliminate the incongruence so that the child feels as comfortable and happy as he or she feels in their own home. The day we do that then we're going to be stepping forward and making some big changes in schools. The attitude of the schools need to change, there needs to be greater understanding of the fact that we've got to stop blaming and victimizing Indian people. Schools have got to understand that they're as much to blame as the some of the parents. We've been in this dualism over the past 30 years of parents blaming the schools and schools blaming the parents. My position has always been "that's fine but it's the educators who get paid. Parents do not get paid in this endeavor so consequently the burden is on the educators because we are the professionals. We're the ones that are paid to do this job, not the parents. And we've got to be big enough and strong enough to accept the criticism. And along with it we've got to be willing to change and reform and make the program more effective. And so I think education's going to have to take on a bigger share of the burden and be willing to change and listen for once the needs and recommendations of parents and in particular the Indian community.

Gruenwald: How involved have the Ute parents been in the education program? How have they reacted to it? Have they been participative in it?

Cuch: Their participation has followed the characterization of the 70s and 80s. In the 70s, latter 60s and early 70s there was very little participation in our programs. Thanks to the federal government the Indian Education Act of 1973, the Kennedy report of 1972--those programs were directed at increasing parent involvement. On up into the 80s with the bilingual ed. program we've seen a growth in the participation in the parents in the education of their children. More and more parents are serving on education committees, PTA, and attending parent-teacher conferences. Parents who attend those meetings are more voiceful. We still do not have any of them serving on the school boards but never-the-less there is more participation. But you see, I'm starting to see a decline also. At the same time there has been an increase over that period of time. I'm sorry to see it decline because once again there is a return back to the 50's mentality.

Gruenwald: What do you think caused the return?

Cuch: Lack of emphasis and follow-through on the part of the school districts and the tribal government and we are not rewarding parents anymore for...

Gruenwald: When was the crucial time they didn't follow through and what could they have done-- what didn't they do specifically?

Cuch: The bilingual education program that was so successful during the first part of the 80s (1980-1983), It's a--bilingual programs are capacity building programs, meaning that the school district should have picked up on those programs and continued them after the federal funding ceased. The public school failed to pick up those programs, the tribal government has failed to support our efforts to continue these bilingual programs with tribal funds. We have had to continue to rely upon federal funds to support these programs, not tribal funds. I'm being pressured out of my position right now to the point where I'm having to--I have nothing to do here anymore. I have no authority. I have tremendous respect for my staff because we've accomplished a lot together. I respect them and they respect me. I've been a very strong supporter of tribally controlled education programs, culturally appropriate education. I do not believe in Isolationism--I do not believe in isolating our people--but I do believe in equal education opportunities. My position has always been; just because you put anglo kids and Indian kids in the same classroom does not mean that equal education opportunity is being practiced. You can still treat the two groups differently even though they're in the same classroom. You can still send them messages that to one group signified that they're accepted and to the other group that they're not quite as good. I do not buy the idea of just placing kids in the classroom and that reflects equal education opportunity. I think you have to go a lot further along and that's why I'm a strong supporter of bilingual bicultural education cause these programs went directly to the heart and they supported cultural sharing and cultural pluralism.

Gruenwald: Now the bilingual program is no longer in the district. Now it's run by the Ute tribe. Why was it taken out of the district like that? Can you explain something of the federal process with the grants?

Cuch: It was not taken out of the district. We simply picked up the burden. We went--Venita went to the district, asked them, as well as the evaluator recommended to the district that they should pick up these programs, continue them. Because the district did not, we applied for a federal grant and picked up those programs and continued them under the sponsorship of the tribe. But as you can see I am being taken out of the picture now by my own tribe and it's going to leave Venita there with her staff--her small staff. I worry about our future. There's been some brainwashing take place here. I think that rather than pursue culturally appropriate education and high standards in education, as well as retaining our culture, I think that instead of pursuing those two goals our tribe is going to probably fall back into the 50s mentality and deny our Indian-ness. In other words we're going to be doing the dirty work of people who do not appreciate other cultures.

Gruenwald: Somebody told me recently that he thinks the Utes are passive--too passive about their education. How do you respond to that? Do you think it's true?

Cuch: About what, education?

Gruenwald: About getting involved in education in the public schools, that the Utes just let the districts do what they want.

Cuch: Yes. I think I have to qualify that. First of all I want to say that education is view by most of our people as being as important--in other words, education is just as important to our people as it is to the anglo people see. But in terms of becoming actively involved and aggressively attempting to make the programs more appropriate, our people have been too passive.

Gruenwald: Why do you think that is? Why don't they get involved? Why don't they push for it?

Cuch: Because the 50s mentality did a lot of--in the 40s and 50s our people were bullied to the point of our people actually feared being involved because then if they were to say too much they were afraid of retaliation or being hung or shot. It's kind of like the Mecham mentality--governor Mecham of Arizona. I people fear people that have the mentality of governor Mecham. His attitude toward black people is reflected here in the basin in terms of how people view our people. Mecham, by the way, is from Altamont, Utah. By the way, they're honoring him this spring. The high school up there is honoring him as their guest speaker. So that kind of reflects the mentality in this basin here. That's why I've been such a strong supporter of bilingual bicultural education because I am not about to turn over the minds of my young children to these kind of people. A mind is precious.

Gruenwald: But the Indians--the Utes--are still fairly passive even after the Indian Self-Determination act and stuff like that. What's going to be needed for them not to be passive, or do you think this is going to continue? Why would it continue? Why wouldn't the stand up and say "Hey!"?

Cuch: Well, there are a whole bunch of dimensions that--first of all, part of that passiveness is also reflected in the culture traditionally. It's been a debate about whether we are an aggressive people. My research indicates no. We only confronted people on the defense. We were not an aggressive people for the most part. So we're not really aggressive people to begin with. Some people will argue that. The other dimension is that part of the passivity is that they don't know how to be active and aggressive. They don't know how to do it. They lack the knowledge and the skill to become aggressively involved in changing the program.

Gruenwald: O.K. Let's move from the parents to the teachers. How supportive do you think the Uintah basin teachers are of Ute children in their classrooms? How do they react to the Ute kids?

Cuch: Well, something came to my mind about the last question. Can I respond to that again? Part of it is--an example of why we don't know how to become involved or aggressive is that the tribal council has not used their political leverage in gaining more of a voice for Indian people. See, right now all the schools that serve our children are technically under the jurisdiction of the tribe. The tribe won a very significant case concerning the jurisdiction powers of the tribe. They were challenged by the city and county governments but the tribe won.

Gruenwald: That's just been this year, right?

Cuch: Right. This means that those schools technically, that some of the school districts policies no longer apply to the tribe unless the tribe agrees to those policies. And what the council could do, if they knew how to use their political leverage is simply say, "now look, we're going to agree to your policies provided you will allow one or two members of our people to serve on the school boards. Or, in the schools which contain over 10% of our children, you will provide for representation on the school board."

Gruenwald: Sounds like were going to need a follow-up study in a couple of years to see what happens with this.

Cuch: Sure. The thing they could do is they could demand that culturally appropriate education be provided in the schools. the could demand that the Ute language be provided for in the schools not only to the Indian kids but for the non-Indian kids as well. And that would be an enrichment for everyone. Ute history, Ute cultural studies, they could demand those kinds of things but the tribal government is not addressing those things. It's been education personnel all by ourselves.

Gruenwald: O.K. Back to the teachers. How supportive do you think the Uintah basin teachers are to the Ute children? How do they treat the children in classes?

Cuch: The teachers who come to work in our schools out of choice most of those teachers are very dedicated, committed professionals. They do the best job they can. I have very little problem working with the teachers in our schools who have a real positive attitude toward our children. I do have a problem with some of the teachers who continue to maintain a very narrow and ignorant attitude--a racist attitude.

Gruenwald: What do you think the percentage is? How many do you think are positive, how many negative? Half and half? Not nearly that much?

Cuch: No. We have much--80% of our teachers in the elementary and secondary--well, no, elementary and I'll go so far as to say the Jr. high school-- 80% of them have a positive attitude. There's only about 20% of the teachers. Most of the teachers have a pretty good attitude.

Gruenwald: What do you think they do for the Ute children-

Cuch: Now let me finish. At the high school level, though,I would have to reverse those figures. My guess would be that 80% of the high school personnel have negative attitudes toward the Indian people.

Gruenwald: Why is that?

Cuch: They lack information, prejudice, narrow-mindedness.

Gruenwald: Well, why are the all at the high school level, and why are the other ones at the--I mean are the other teachers older at the high school?

Cuch: We have more a higher percentage of enrollment in the nearest elementary and Jr. highs (40-50%) than we do in the high schools (11%). We lack representation, for the most part, because the high school is located in the Duchesne school district, and the county seat is 30 miles away. We're not present (excluded) in their political arena.

Gruenwald: Do you think that's part of the cause for the big drop-out rate over there?

Cuch: That's part of it. Definitely.

Gruenwald: It seems like no matter how good your programs are here they go to the high school and drop out.

Cuch: I'm very critical of that program. I don't even think that it's providing an appropriate education to the anglo children. I don't think young people feel wanted, they don't feel important. They're not treated with respect at that school so they act accordingly. This is no reflection on all the personnel over there. I think that Mr. Coleman, who used to work in the Jr. high school on the west side of Uintah county is doing the best he can and if there were more people of Mr. Coleman's mentality (he's the vice principal and we grew up together in Fort

Duchesne) if there were more people of his calibre I think things would change over there. They've got to do a house cleaning over there. The teachers and the administration and they need to start developing more respect for all people. Not just Indian people but people in general. And once that happens things will change. But I think--I will say this for the Uintah school district. The Uintah school district is initiating steps towards reforming their schools and I see a bright future for the Uintah school district. Duschesne, no. I don't see enough growth there.

Gruenwald: Is Uintah initiating stuff on their own or just with prompting? What are they initiating?

Cuch: There are more of our children in the Uintah school district and Uintah has had a change in their political structure--new people. And they're a lot more open and understanding.

Gruenwald: How long has this been going on?

Cuch: Only since the new superintendent took office, Mr. Drollinger. Prior to that time the district attitude was very negative and racist.

Gruenwald: What specifically do you see the Uintah basin or just the Uintah county teachers doing that are so good with the Ute kids? Are they being bicultural? Are they just being nicer about trying to teach them anglo ways? What are they doing?

Cuch: Well the best example I can give you is the principle at West Jr. High, Ted Taylor. He's a good man but you know Ted and I did not always used to get along. There was a time when him and I just flat out disliked each other. I considered him a racist. An ignorant, bigoted, narrow-minded person. And he considered me a radical trouble maker. There's no secret about that. We laugh about it today. O.K. Now Ted was part of the old reign of the Uintah school district. And when the superintendent lost his position Ted was given an ultimatum to either come over here and work with the Indians or get out. Ted chose to come over here and work with the Indians. He'd heard the horror stories over here and been part of the hear-say that these schools were nothing but trouble, that the Indian children were completely out of control and didn't value education and that people were evil and all of this other foolishness so when he came over to this school district over here he was once again reminded by folks what it would be like over here. And when he came over here--and he'll tell you this by the way--He told me this. When he came over here he was completely surprised to find children who you could talk to and who were open and cooperative and people who did value education. And he found a completely different situation here than what he'd been told to believe on the east side of the county (predominantly white Mormon people) all these years. Again I'll say he was a part of this prejudice at one time as well. He has completely changed his position. He is an advocate for our children as well as for the anglo children on the west side of the Uintah county. He's taken up this burden and he is going forward. I have nothing but respect and admiration for him and he has the same for me. He now understands why I said and did what I did back in the early and latter 70s. And he understands instead of us being enemies we're supporters now--political supporters--and advisors. I advise him on things and he does the same with me. We have a very good cooperative positive relationship and that's all that I've ever tried to do here. But you see, the difference between my relationship with people and what other folks want is that I have a relationship based on respect for Mr. Taylor, see. It's not a superficial relationship. We've had to battle each other out to get an understanding. We know who each other is now and what we stand for. It's an earnest sincere relationship. Other relationships are very superficial. People sit there and stroke each other and shake hands and the next minUte they're ripping each other up.

Gruenwald: What is the relationship between the teachers and the kids do you think?

Cuch: I think that usually what happens even if you have a racist teacher that over time it develops into a better relationship because the teacher comes to realize these are just young human beings and they're very vulnerable. And I think over time any professional that's not too brainwashed into thinking that people are evil, anyone who is not too brainwashed will open up and come around to some understanding.

Gruenwald: What affect--you know we've talked about the effect of the people in charge of the school district--what kind of impact do just the parents of the anglo kids have? I mean what kind of--does the political climate effect what goes on with programs? How, do you think?

Cuch: Well, first of all there is racism here. And it really isn't--I can't say that it's always a majority of the people. It's just that those that are very ignorant and narrow-minded sometimes speak the loudest or end up getting elected to positions, key political positions. But there have been times, for example, When we had Ute language in the schools that a lot of the anglo parents refused to allow their children to remain in those classes. And they made it very clear to the administrators that they wanted to have no part of that language. And some of those children had to sit out in the hall and miss class. And it upset them.

Gruenwald: So now were these Ute language classes supposed to be for all the kids in the school or was it a select class?

Cuch: We've had to be very careful about that because our people resent sharing their language with the anglo people. Many of them fear we will lose our language the same way we've lost our land and then the other things. Consequently, we've had to be careful about sharing our language. Our position has been and we feel we should, if we're going to teach Ute language to Indian children, it should also be offered to the anglo kids. We don't want to isolate ourselves. We want to share what we have and be fair with everyone else. If we want fairness then we need to demonstrate fairness on our part as well, so. Those of my generation understand that and are willing to share that but some of the older people, they don't quite feel comfortable with that so we've had to really time it very carefully. We've had to kind of plan it out.

Gruenwald: Has the same thing happened with the Ute history class?

Cuch: Same. Exact same thing. It's just that there's a little bit more willingness to share the history course than the language. But even then that class isn't even open to anglo children. It's not even available to them. Except that this year it will change. Now this is what, 1988. The Ute History has been offered in the Jr. high school since about 1973-74 and it's taken that long for that course to be made available to anglo children.

Gruenwald: O.K. To kind of get back. I didn't mean to get you off track. Besides not allowing their kids to take the history or to take the language class, what other kind of affect do you think the mainstream anglo attitude has on the programs? I mean, I would think that would be detrimental to a program for parents to be telling the administrators "Hey, we don't want it." What other kind of effects do you think they have?

Cuch: Well, I think the average Uintah basin anglo person is a decent person. But what they lack is information. They don't even know the history of our people. They do not even understand what kind of people we are.

Gruenwald: Well, they never got it in class either.

Cuch: Right. Exactly. So it's been their leaders (Mormon leaders) who I hold responsible for this ignorance. The people they've elected to office on these school boards and then the school administrative positions of leadership in the school who I hold responsible for this failure. Now including our own leaders, because see once again our position, the position of my staff, my generation has been that well, if we want fairness then we have got to reflect and demonstrate fairness ourselves which means if we want Ute history in the schools we need to make it available to the anglo children. If we want change in the district then we need to effect change through information, education, and make our history known to the anglo children as well. And the same applies to the language. If we really want cultural pluralism we will make our language available to anglo people as well. Now that's a liberal position and but it's taken time to be able to say that. A lot of resistance. I want to add with regard to the support of the Uintah Basin teachers. A lot of times it's not so much the teachers, the teachers have really rallied and advocated for our children, but a lot of times it's been the district policy, district personnel that have gotten in the way. Constantly it's this matter of district wide policy vs. what's best for this one particular school. And the teachers, I think, have not been given enough leeway, authorization to make decisions in the best interest of young people. I think the school district policy gets in the way a lot of times so I really don't have a problem with a lot of our teachers working in our schools. They really have done the best they can but I do have a problem sometimes with the school structure.

Gruenwald: O.K. I can't really think of any other questions. Is there anything you kind of want to add or got left out or I didn't ask you about?

Cuch: Well, I just want to say that I think once again that of the two school districts I see the Uintah school district opening up and a lot of that is due to the superintendent, the new superintendent, the new leadership over there. I think there needs to be some changes in the Duschesne school district all the way through. I think that what's needed over there more than anything is to educate the superintendent and the school board members with the history of the Ute tribe and develop some respect for our culture. Those people I consider to be very-- I've done some things, I've conducted some workshops over there but it's not enough. I consider that group to be very narrow-minded in their perception of our people and our culture and they need to wake up because there are a lot of other issues that are affecting us as a group, anglo and Ute people. For example the water. Because of our differences instead of supporting one another we're fighting each other and meanwhile our water's being diverted over to the Wasatch front. I think that's utter foolishness. I think it's time folks woke up in this basin. But I can, I'm going to say this; the average basin person is actually a descent person, descent human being but they lack information. We lack information about each other and about the world in general. And so I think there needs to be some changes here. I think there's been, once again I'm going to say this too, that a lot of the conservative politics and narrowness has also influenced our own tribal councils to the point where their thinking is no different than the local county commissioners with regard to our own people. You can have black people who are racist toward their own people, black people. You can have Indian people, just because they're Indian does not mean that they're not going to be racist or have a very narrow, ignorant view of their own people. And that's what I see has happened here. I attribute that to part of the reasons why I'm being forced out of my position is that I'm an advocate for my culture and for my people.

Gruenwald: That seems like something that I run up against again and again in literature on Indian people across

America. The factualism caused by that kind of split. That doesn't seem unusual.

Cuch: Back in the east with the blacks it was the uncle Tom and here we have the apple Indian, uncle tom-tom, the people who want so much to be accepted by the anglo people that they'll do it at the expense of their own people, see. I really worry about that because it's not necessary. You don't have to sell out your own culture and your own tribe and your own traditional beliefs in order to be a good person. You don't have to do any of that. Also, I've come upon the research by Dr. Banks of the University of Washington, Seattle and I've learned that there are various stages of cultural development. The first stage is that cultural groups tend to isolate themselves and they don't want to share any information about their culture. The next stage is when people feel comfortable enough to talk about their values, what's important, and on up through the stages. Multi-cultural, they overcome the fears of being inferior and then the more they develop the more they open they become. Well our tribe, I can't help but think, are still on stage one or two. We're very insecure yet. We don't have a lot of confidence about who we are and what we are about. So I think it's going to take time. I guess what I'm saying is that our tribe needs to grow up and develop a little bit more and catch up with other tribes.

Other tribes are running their own schools, day schools, high schools, and they're running there own colleges. Two-year colleges and four-year baccalaureate degree colleges and they're running them with the Indian culture being integrated and included in the curriculum. In other words these are the tribes who are not ashamed and do not apologize for being Indian people. They are proud and they feel really strong and good about who they are. In other words they're confident in the anglo world and they're also confident in the Indian world. And that's been our objective but I can't help but think that someone in the tribal government as well as in the basin here does not want that to happen. They want us to do away with our--deny our Indian-ness, our heritage, and become Mormons, brown Mormons. Goody two shoes or people who deny their color and to me that's living a lie.

Gruenwald: One thing that interested me was I looked in the files at the long hair issue and I've noticed that with all the meetings you guys have had on Title 4 to tell people what's happening, few come, the Indians are, like we discussed before, passive about that but it seems like when the school district said "We're going to cut you kids hair" all of the sudden the Indians weren't passive at all. Now what do you think the difference is between being passive about educational programs and then suddenly not being passive about an issue like that? What do you think that indicates? What does that indicate to you?

Cuch: Well, there has been a subtle loss of culture on our own part over thes years. The long hair issue signified a direct and blatant threat to our culture. Long hair represented our Indian-ness, the Indian world. And that rule requiring short hair epitomized the districts attitude toward our culture. The long hair issue is an excellent example of the cultural oppression that has continued to this day. It's just that people no longer associate the long hair with history, culture, and language. The oppression has been subtle and very effective, devastating to Ute culture.

Gruenwald: So they saw the long hair more of a symbol of their culture than they did their language?

Cuch: Right. Exactly. And also there has been this influence toward materialism. The conservative wave that's come through our country. The other part is that yes, there are some people who say "Is our language and culture important anymore?", in comparison to a job and a house and a two car family.

Gruenwald: So in other words there is no way that the tribe can remain totally free of dominant attitudes. I mean maybe they won't be just like the dominant culture but they're going to go with the same...

Cuch: That's why we have pursued an adaptive posture, an adaptive position. Now we saw it really early in the 70s that there was none of this returning back to the blanket, the old Indian ways. But we did see that you could retain the basic philosophy and the principles of our culture. Basic beliefs and honesty and integrity and prayer.

Gruenwald: So you would consider people in education like you to be a good effect of what was going on in the 70s. I mean you learn this and you retain it.

Cuch: Right. We are trying to tell young people that go for an education "Be whatever you want to be just don't think that it's necessary that you have to stop being Indian and try to be something you are not." And the reason we're clear about that is because to do that, to live a lie is to invest in self destructive behavior, see, because down the road people begin to hate themselves because deep down they know they're not white, they know that and they get angry about that trying to deceive themselves and eventually they set out to destroy themselves either with drugs, booze or other excessive abuse and so what we're suggesting is "be honest with yourself, love and appreciate yourself and you'll always be strong. You're going to run into some problems in the anglo world, you're going to experience defeat, failure and when that day comes fall back on your Indian culture, your heritage and gather strength from that and go on. In other words if you fall down, it's not important that you fall down, what's important is that you get back up on your feet again and continue on with your life. We think in this way Indian culture is an asset. It's not a burden, it's a strength, a wonderful strength, a wonderful thing that we're blessed with, see. Now that's a completely different attitude than the 50s mentality which says your language and culture as an Indian is just going to get in the way. The more you get away from you're own people and assimilate and merge into the American mainstream the better off you're going to be. Well, I've seen to many burned out drunks that adopted that philosophy and I don't like it. I hate to see our people destroy themselves. I really hate to see drunks in the gutter. I really hate to see that kind of thing. And I love to see traditional Indians who are also good at what they do. I love to see that. And I've seen a lot of them throughout this country and they're the strongest Indian people. Those that take the best from their culture and the best from the anglo culture because the anglo culture certainly has a lot to offer too. We live in one of the best countries in the world and I'm very proud of that. I love this country and what it's done for me. So people should never get me wrong. I'm as patriotic as the next. But there's a difference. I'm not going to fight for some war that I don't believe in. But I certainly will fight for any attempt to disrupt the principles of this country because I believe in the principles of this country or I wouldn't be saying what I'm saying, see. But you see, around here there is a lot of Mecham philosophy, extremism. You're either good or bad. People are constantly throwing labels at you. They are very intolerant and self-righteous and crazy in my opinion. In the Uintah Basin, the anti-Indian or negative influence on the Ute culture is being promoted by the Jesus Christ Church of Latter Day Saints, the Mormons. I believe there is a deliberate and systematic attemt to destroy the Ute culture on the part of the LDS leadership. I would like to make this statement absolutely clear at this time. The message to Ute children has been very clear. "Join the church and you will be welcomed in our schools and becme a part of our community. If you remain outside our church, you will be treated accordingly!"

Appendix C

Norma Denver - Interview*

By Kim Gruenwald

April 14, 1988

Gruenwald: O.K. Mrs. Denver, can you tell me something about what you've done in the basin with Indian education in the past and what you're doing right now?

Denver: I think in the past pretty much what we're doing right now. We started, when Title 1 funds first became available to the school district, at that time we were teaching Indian history but only 15 or 20 minutes a day in special classes. Then we (educators from Uintah school district office, members of the Ute Tribal Business Committee, teachers, Title I PAC, and staff) decided to take the funding and gather material and publish a book. I had already been gathering material for about 20 years on the Ute people. And this was with June Lyman and her husband who was superintendent at the Bureau Indian Affairs at the time. With the grant we published a book and we also went to Durango, Colorado (Fort Lewis College) to put together a workbook to be used in the 4th grade. Later we moved it into the 7th grade at West Jr. High school. We

*This transcript has been heavily edited by the interviewee. A complete copy of the transcript and the casseste tape is in the possession of the interviewer.

also started a class at Union High School. It is no longer taught in the 4th grade, no longer taught at Union High schoo, l but we have continued to teach it here at West Jr. High. Our grant isn't that large. We have one full-time employee working under Title 4 at Todd Elementary and Lapoint Elementary and she is an attendance counselor and this is strictly her duty. We have one attendance counselor at Jr. High who does the same thing. I only work part time, 4 hours a day. Sometimes I'm here 8 but 4 hours is what I'm getting paid for because I retired about 10 years ago. We continue, then, to teach Ute history, tribal government, Ute culture classes. We have Indian Day at West Jr. High, where the children dress in their native clothes and perform for the school. We also take programs out to the other schools. We've tried to encourage them to hold on to their traditions and culture and take the best of both cultures. I guess that's about what we're doing now.

Gruenwald: One question I wanted to ask you was about the motivation of the children in the schools. Do the kids seem to be really motivated by this class? What do you think really motivates the Ute kids and what do you think holds them back?

Denver: Well, I don't have all of the answers by any means, but I think that they like to study about themselves. We all do. I think it's much more interesting than studying about things that we do rather than what other people do. And, if you will remember, they've always come into the public schools and had to learn the non-Indian history, the non-Indian ways and they've never had an opportunity to learn about themselves until we started these programs. I think this motivates them. I think our kids have really come a long way. When I think back when I first started, kids sat in the back of the classroom, very few of them spoke out. Today the kids are doing very well. We just took 36 students to BYU, the Indian students who had better than a 3.8 grade average. I think this is a big step forward. We don't have drop outs at West Jr. High but after they leave here and go to Union many of them drop out.

Gruenwald: Why do you think that is?

Denver: I guess I have some ideas but they're strictly my own. I want this understood that in talking today I am talking strictly on the way I see and feel about things even though I work for the Uintah school district and work for the Ute Indian Tribe. They'll have to be my own opinions. I think that after they leave West, and we're 50% Indian and 50% non-Indian in this school, that it's really difficult for them and many of them drop out because they see they can't do it. I would like to see more programs put in at Union and I've said this for years and years and years but it doesn't seem to ring a bell. They need to have more cultural programs there for them the same as we have here at West Jr. High. Our students here, if you'll take a check you'll find out they play on all of the basket ball, baseball, football teams. They're involved in all of the assemblies and when they get over to Union, they're not able to do this. They can't keep their grades up and maybe one or two in one year gets to play on any of the basketball, football or volleyball teams. I think it just discourages the students. It isn't Union's fault, I'm sure, in many instances because many of the students go over there and they're not as well prepared as the non-Indian students. I think you know and I know that children who come from homes where the parents have a college education are going to do better in school and we don't have that many on the reservation. I think the schools try and I think we have good teachers. I'm really pleased with the teaching staff here at West this year. I think it's just excellent. But it isn't enough just to have it at one school. Union has good teachers too, but I do think we need bilingual programs. Now, in making a definition of bilingual, they tell us that most bilingual students are students who speak their own language, then come into the school, and English then becomes their second language. That isn't the case here because our Indian students have lost their language. And they don't really have a command of the English language anywhere near as good as non-Indian students so this is a problem also. I think of an Indian lady that years ago told me that when my children first started school--and I have a very large family--they all spoke only Ute, when my students in the middle started school they both spoke English and Indian. And when my last group started they spoke only English.

Gruenwald: So the bilingual program here is trying to save the culture then?

Denver: Yes, there are problems and as far overcoming them we have come a long way. We have Indian students in our school who have a 4.0 grade average and this is great but most of these students come from homes where the parents have had a better education and are holding good jobs.

Gruenwald: Do they stay at that level when they get to Union or do some of them drop out too?

Denver: No, not too many. They'll go on--those will be the ones. I was just reading in the first educational Ute History book we published--the first school was started on this reservation about 1875 and was not successful. It took many years befor a year round school was started.

Gruenwald: Tell me something about how the parents have reacted to the Title 4 and Title 7 program for their children? What have they had to say about it, how supportive have they been about it?

Denver: Pretty good. The Indian people haven't been as active in the school as they should be because most of the times when they come in to the school they are called for a problem. But in some instances, and of course the percentage is lower, we have a lot of good support. I have a parent advisor committee made up of Indian people and yes they do support the program.

Gruenwald: In what ways do they support the program?

Denver: Well, they support it by helping with us on Indian Day, coming and making Fry Bread for the classes. If we need letters written to go back to Washington they're supportive in doing these types of things.

Gruenwald: Is that a small percentage of the Indian parents that are active?

Denver: Well, yes because we usually have only about 10 or 11 on the committee.

Gruenwald: Out of how many parents?

Denver: Well, lets see, I have no idea how many parents we have. We have about 150 students here--(Indian students) in this school so perhaps that isn't very high but when we have Indian Day or programs, most of the parents will be here.

Gruenwald: What impact do you thing the non-Indian attitudes toward the Utes have on Indian educational situations specifically?

Denver: In our school, Indian and the non-Indian kids get along very well. They dance together, they play together, they go down the halls with their arms around each other, this seems to stop after they leave here. The kids get along well here. I think a lot of times where the non-Indian is more verbal, we are a more verbal people than they are, many times they speak out and answer questions before the Indian child gets a chance to speak but then this shouldn't really be too harmful to their education. Some of the weaknesses I find is that it's difficult for an Indian student to hand in assignments and of course it's easy to blame the home and the home to blame the teacher and all of these good things. And we can't do that. We have to keep working at it. I wish that we had more funding to do more things involving the tradition and their culture because I think it's important to keep it. You go out to BYU and see the performances and how they travel and so forth, you'll find out that this is really helping studsents stay in school. Bob Chapoose works with me under Title 4 in this school. This year we took 28 Indian students back to New York, Washington D.C., New Jersey, Philadelphia and along through that area and this really helps the kids. It gives them the opportunity to get out and see the outside world. We've never had problems with the students. They've been excellent. People have been really good to us and I think this is something that other schools should try to do. You know the non-Indian student goes to primary and sunday school and all of these things and they do learn a lot from attending these activities. Many Indian students don't have this opportunity.

Gruenwald: Why has there been such a concentration of programs, at Todd and West but there hasn't been at the other schools around in the other districts?

Denver: Because of the amount of students we receive funding for so much per child and there's, like I said, 16 or 17% of Indians at Union so their funding is very low. It's got to come from some other source and I can't understand why the government and other people can't see this. I'm sure Forrest Cuch does. Have you interviewed him? I'm sure Forrest can see this but there really needs to be more funding into the high school. They've got to really concentrate on the programs. They've got to really get a lot of individualized help.

Gruenwald: Do you think that that's lack of money from the government or do you think that that's Union High school's (unknown word) to put out the effort?

Denver: Right now I think everybody's hurting for money so I'm not sure this is going to be helpful.

Gruenwald: O.K. tell me a little bit about the Ute history class and what kind of things you've done in it and what kind of specific affects you've seen it have on the kids.

Denver: O.K. in starting Ute history I use both the book that I helped publish on the Ute people and the one the Ute tribe did. We have a work book for the students. I use a lot of aids. I use a lot of film. Most of tshe film I use I get from Brigham Young University or the center in Heber. We watch the film and we discuss it and what effect it has on the way the Indian people live today. After they were moved here from Colorado following the Meeker Massacre most of the Indian people wouldn't talk about it because they were afraid they'd be moved again or they'd lose their land. And so the kids really don't know a lot about it. As a matter of fact, over at Union High school when we first started it one Indian girl got 100 on every test, handed every paper in but would never talk. At the end of the class I asked her why. She said "well, my grandparents told me not to talk about it because maybe the government will take more of our land away." We do take field trips to historical sights here in the Uinta basin. The kids enjoy this. Many of them have never been into nine-mile canyon or been to the Rock Creek area or into the areas where battles and things took place. Well, you know the Spanish were here long before historians have a recording of it and of course most of them know that they were here too. So the kids do enjoy this. We have guest speakers come in--Indian people. We also have workshops from the students. We bring Howard Rainer in from Brigham Young University who is a full-blooded Indian and try to help the kids improve their self-concept. So we do a lot of things just beside learning Ute history. We have Indian Foods Day. I had beading classes for the girls. I haven't had any this year.

Gruenwald: O.K. do the Indian kids mostly get these special programs just in special classes and it's nowhere else in the rest of the school?

Denver: Yes. That is very true. Now, on our attendance counselors they work between the home and the school. And Bob even goes down and meets with the Ute business committee in the courts. We try to do everything we can to keep the kids in school. It's always been the consensus of the teachers that if the students are in school they'll learn but this is not, of course, always the case.

Gruenwald: Do you think that--What kind of effect do you--do you think there is any effect with kids just hearing about their history in this class and then going out and not having any Indian literature and English classes or, I mean do you think here is an effect?

Denver: Well, every class could add Indian things to their class. You know that and I know that. There are beautiful poems written by the Indian people. These kids are very artistic. I think that there are a lot of things that the classes could add in without it being a part of the Title IV or JOM programs. It could be a part of the school. But there has to be more curriculum written, of course, more training. I think that it would really help if every teacher had been trained to work with Indian students before they come into our schools.

Gruenwald: Gerald Mitchell mentioned that they would take a group of teachers to BYU and they'd get trained and the teachers, most of them would turn over the next year. Is that still a problem?

Denver: We don't have a high turn-over here at West and I think that's why we are successful here. We really don't. Probably the lowest, I'd say, in the district. Most of the teachers are all returning next year. And this does help. A lot of times after a teacher has been trained to be a teacher they don't like to be told how to deal with a situation and many times when we've had workshops and had the teachers in I don't feel that we got the response back from the workshops that we should have gotten back from the teachers. I think that they know there are certain things that they have to cover. This is set up by the state and they know they have to do it.

Gruenwald: How would you characterize the relationship between the Ute education division and the school district and the schools?

Denver: You mean for the Ute tribe itself? Forrest is a very outstanding person and I think Francis McKinley that we had here years ago was one of the most brilliant persons I ever worked for. I really feel that they should listen a little bit more closely to them. Forrest Cuch and Francis McKinley are excellent educators.

Gruenwald: Do you think that the separation is good for the Indian students to be in here alone?

Denver: No, I think it's time that it moved in to the school. I think that Ute history should become part of the curriculum and be taught to all of them. Next year it will be taught to all of the students here at this school. It will be called Uinta Basin history. For the seventh graders. For the first quarter they will take Utah history and then move into what the school will call Uinta Basin history. This the principal felt, would be better accepted by the non-Indian people. The school will be covering Ute history and non-Indian history too.

Gruenwald: So then will the kids still have a Ute class?

Denver: Yes. We'll still continue with the Ute class. If the kids can come in here and get A's in the class where they can't in other classes it is still needed because it's something they really enjoy then of course they're not competing against the non-Indian. Boy it would be great if somebody could come up with all of the answers wouldn't it.

Gruenwald: How do the Ute parents feel about Ute history being taught to everyone?
Denver: To tell you the truth a vote has never been taken on it. The parent advisory committee has not approved it at this point, but Uinta Basin History will be taught with school funds.

Gruenwald: Why do you think the parent advisory committee doesn't want that to happen?

Denver: Just Because the funding is coming from the government and they think it should be used on the Indian child I think is the reason. I think if the district would say "we'll pay for half"--and of course they are saying this now because next year our principal, as I told you, said we are going to have it for all of the students. So by being persistent and staying in one school we've got this one going. Maybe eventually it will come into the other.

Gruenwald: I can't think of any more questions. Is there anything you would like to add to what we've talked about?

Denver: No, but if you can think of any other questions you'd like to ask you can call me and I'd be glad to answer them.

Appendix D

Venita Taveapont - Interview

By Kim Gruenwald

April 8, 1988

Gruenwald: To start off, what is your position now in the education division and what has it been in the past?

Taveapont: I'm the director of the Ute Family English Literacy program which is funded by the office of bilingual education. We're in our second year of a three-year grant. And I started working with education in 1979 as the coordinator of the Ute language program. And from there, the district had asked the education division to submit a joint proposal to the office of bilingual education to provide bilingual education services to the students at Todd Elementary. That was back in 1979. And I had only worked for education for 9 months when that opportunity came to be and since I had worked with the language there wasn't anyone else who knew the language as I know it and working with the language analysis and the trained linguist to do the analysis and research, I was in a position to renew what the language was doing, how it works, whereas no one else did and so in that way one of

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*This transcript has been edited by the interviewee. A complete copy of the transcript and the casseste tape is in the possession of the interviewer.

the features of bilingual education, of the Ute bilingual education, is that in order to meet the needs of the students we need to know what is going on with his language. Now most of the students here, they understand you. They have a skill in English that is a Ute skill and many people will say that they don't because they don't speak the language. They speak English only. But yet what they learn, what they know subconsciously I guess is the idea, it affects what they're doing in English. Now the regular teachers really didn't know, they knew there was a problem but how to handle that problem, if they're not trained to look at it that way, if they're not trained to spot those problems because they're not linguists or they're not familiar with the Ute language the way it's structured. And in the beginning a lot of the language teaching or the curriculum that was designed to meet the needs of the students was basically learning the Ute language and then transferring that knowledge into English. So what we were doing in our curriculum in the basic program was to augment the regular school curriculum. In the basic program we only address grades k through 3 and then in the second program it was to 6th grade. At the time when the program first started too, the school district had adopted a new reading program, The Open Court Reading Program, and since we are in this school and we don't want to be stepping on anybody's toes we want to blend as much as we can. What we have to do is ride along with the rest of the school staff of teachers and everyone else. My people are trained in how to do Open Court methods and they've just incorporated it right along with teaching the language. As you can see some of the concept cards on the wall, it comes off of that Open Court idea. We taught words and sounds using the Open Court method so that it didn't detract too much from what they are doing in school. It wasn't something that was totally foreign. We want structure it in a way that we augmented or we complimented what the people were doing.

Gruenwald: How did you want the program to help them in their later grades? What did you expect to accomplish there?

Taveapont: Well, the main thing I think, we did a lot of emphasis on building self-concept, building self-image, making sure that they feel good about themselves as students, as people, as Ute people, as non-Indian people. We made sure that they felt good and they had success, which they did. Valid successes. And the main idea behind that was we, in our philosophy we believe that if people feel good about themselves they can do anything that they want to. They can accomplish anything that they want to.

Gruenwald: How have the kids that did this program done in later grades so far? I guess it's still pretty new but some of the kids must be in 8th grade.

Taveapont: The kids that have participated in the program for 3 years, or even the 6 years that we were there, they are the ones who are on the honor rolls, they are the ones who have good attendance records, they are the ones that are doing extra things, and you've never seen that before. You never really noticed it as much or there weren't that many students.

Gruenwald: How many are there that are doing this kind of success?

Taveapont: I couldn't give you numbers but there is quite a big group. The first time we noticed it was when some of the kids were taking risks to be pointed out as leaders or they were on the honor roll because before it was really a thing you don't do because of peer pressure.

Gruenwald: What kind of stuff did they do to take risks?

Taveapont: They'd try out for basketball teams, they'd try out for cheerleader, that sort of thing.

Gruenwald: So are more of them on the (unknown words)?

Taveapont: Yes, going away from the peer group see, being recognized.

Gruenwald: How have the teachers in the schools reacted to the Ute Indian programs? I mean, have they been supportive of them? How do they treat the kids in class?

Taveapont: You mean when it first started or after it's been there for 6 years?

Gruenwald: I think what I mean is have you see it change? Did you see a certain response from teachers before it came in. Has their response changed while it's been there? I mean, how do they generally--I guess what I'm trying to ask is what kind of treatment, what kind of environment do the Ute students face when they go into that classroom with that non-Indian teacher? What kind of environment are they going to face and has that changed through the program?

Taveapont: Well, when we first started it was like, they looked at us like, "why are you in the schools? I mean, you don't have a degree, you don't have training" and it just really was evident by the way the teacher reacted to you and what you are doing in the classroom. But as the year went by and the people received more training, one of the main emphasis was that they do receive training. They could not be employed there without agreeing to that stipulation that they receive training throughout the year. And that was another priority that we had was to train the people that would be in the classrooms. As it progressed in the three years there was a mutual cooperation and understanding and there was a lot of support. Of the teachers that didn't support, they either left or just let us do what we wanted to do in the classroom. And there weren't very many of those. Because we realized that a lot of the teachers were territorial, "This is mine, I don't want anyone else to interfere" and those kind of people really had parents come to their classroom and be aids or whatever because they felt that it disrupted the whole class and disrupted them and their routine because they have certain things to do their way. And they were really possessive of the students especially when the bilingual teacher became, developed a rapport with the students and those students had respect and love for the teacher. So the regular classroom teacher was resentful of that. And we didn't want to cause any problems in that way and sometimes we had to talk it over with the teacher. Say "this is what I am seeing." We had to be open and up-front but sometimes that was one sided too. We were open and up-front but they weren't and they went behind our backs to the principal and complained about some class disruption saying that this teacher, or particular person doesn't have classroom management skills or doesn't have discipline skills. But there was a control in the class that wasn't the type of control that teacher wanted. You know, the rigid...

Gruenwald: Now you mentioned this yesterday with the teachers wanting to control things a certain way. You talked about working cooperatively vs. working independently they way each teacher would view things. Can you tell me some more about that? Teacher attitudes about how children should be working?

Taveapont: Well, I just touched on it just now. In our way we believe that we should help each other--in our culture. If one gains, everyone gains. So the regular teacher wanted them to work independently and become more competitive. We didn't really stress that. We wanted them to learn together and to help each other because you're building cooperation and we think that's one of the most highly valued traits for a person to have and I think our program just emphasized that. And there was that cooperation and understanding. There wasn't so much competitiveness. But I'll tell you a situation that happened. In one grade there were quite a number of non-

Indian students that didn't want to take bilingual or that weren't given permission. And the teacher felt like, well, there's that group and then there's this group of Indian students that want to take bilingual education. Why don't we separate the two groups and have the Indian group with the Indian teacher and the non-Indian group with the non-Indian teacher and they could be working on something else. Well, what happened was there was a resentment from the non-Indian group that this group of Indian students were treated special. This group really took off. They were learning reading, they were doing poetry, they were doing a lot of culturally oriented materials. Now this other group resented that. Because they weren't being included, they weren't participating in this group and so a lot of contention was going on when this group went back into the classroom. So the environment wasn't good for anybody. It wasn't good for the teacher, it wasn't good for the student. And it was backfiring on her. So she came to me and she said well, "we're having this problem," and I said "well, we just did what you asked. It didn't work so lets put it back together again rather than not having it at all." And at the end of the year this class was the best class, one of best because they both wanted to cooperate and be together again. And it worked out really well. And from then on this teacher cooperated more--gave suggestions, they planned together, and I don't know, maybe she finally realized what it meant, you know, what bilingual education was--what it meant because from then on she was a good supporter of the program. And there were some that just didn't work out. And they just wouldn't change either because these people have been in the classroom for how many years? And they've been schooled either at USU or BYU back way back then and then--you know, teaching has changed. Every year it changes. And some of these people weren't willing to make that change. They're not listening to make that change. I think that's pretty bad too because just because you have a certificate, just because you're a teacher now doesn't mean that you quit learning. It doesn't mean that what you're teaching is right either because there are new techniques, there are new things happening all of the time. And I haven't been in this school for two years now up at Todd and I know that there are changes taking place. Taking place there and taking place elsewhere. But then when I go back, like a couple of weeks ago there's one teacher that's still the same. You know, after two years you'd think that something would have changed but she is still the same. And I can see the differences now. My perception of teaching is a lot more refined because of the classes I'm taking. But at the same time I'm able to use what I know, what I have seen in the school for the past 6 years in learning this new stuff. And I can contribute to the discussions saying, "well, this is what I have seen, this is what I--why was it this way?" And I think education should be not just learning academics for the Ute students. I think also their culture of the language should be used because the non-Indian language, the non-Indian culture is there. You can't help but learning it because it's all around you.

Gruenwald: Would you like the non-Indians to learn a lot more about the Utes too?

Taveapont: Yes. I think they should. Especially if they live in this area. Why isolate themselves? Because we're here.

Gruenwald: O.K. the other thing we talked about a little bit about the whole learning process was modeling, the kids having the chance to fail and try again, is that an important, I mean do you think they don't get that in a mainstream, kind of, and you'd like to see that, can you elaborate on that?

Taveapont: A lot of times the teacher stands up and lectures and maybe demonstrates it once. The students, they don't have the time to practice. And the teacher expects them to get it right off. Well, some students can't. And especially from the teacher just talking about it, describing it. Some students have to see it and they have to touch it. There's abstract and concrete and I know some teachers would say "they have to learn abstract, they have to learn about thinking about it and imagining it in there mind." I think I'd be more worried about whether that child could do it rather than seeing to do it in their mind. I think I'd rather have that child be successful at it by seeing a model and then doing it. If I wanted--because it was really hard for me to try to add up figures--you know the teacher would call me--"add two and two, divide by 1" you know, going on and on and it was really hard for me to do that. And that was in the 6th grade. Now just imagine what the kids in first, second, or third are feeling. And now they're saying that Ute students, or Indian students are right-brain learners, and most non-Indian students are left brain-learners. But that's good to a certain degree. But you can also learn to become a left-brain learner too. So all of this labeling is taking place. I think maybe what the teacher should do is build for success.

Gruenwald: You were talking yesterday about failing and then having another chance to succeed. Is that like--do you want to use that as a teaching technique or a education technique? Letting kids try and fail and then try again?

Taveapont: Well, not in essence failing. You know, if you don't know how to make a cake you have a chance to try it again. And I think maybe that's what they should do is not be judged on that first try. They should be given enough chance to do it again.

Gruenwald: Can you tell me something about how the kids within the class were reacting? I mean did they--you told me about how they felt afterwards but I mean was there a lot of participation in the class.

Taveapont: Yes, there's a lot of participation because there's a lot of action involved. It wasn't just sitting and listening. I think that was one of the problems that they had like I was talking about like classroom control and this teacher doesn't know how to give discipline or manage the classroom. But it was a certain kind of control. The kids were moving about but they were doing things constructively but to the person who came in just for a minute to see, well, it wasn't under control and I think maybe that is the problem is that too many teachers like to have rigid control of the students. The should be allowed to move around and especially like our classes were in the afternoon, or right after lunch, and that's about the time when they need to move around.

Gruenwald: O.K. I can't think of anything else I really wanted to ask you. Is there anything you'd like to add about the program that you think is important to it's success or failure? Like is there anything that you'd just like to say about it after knowing what I'm looking for to do my history?

Taveapont: I think if we had to do it all over again, I, well, I don't want to say that I'd do it the same way. I think now that I'm more experienced, it has quite a difference, you know, because having this program here, now,--and I have people that have worked in this school, well, one person who's worked in this school system and is a certified teacher and one person with 20 years of experience and one who's participating on a teacher-training program. That really say's a lot because I really don't have to do that much training. The only area that I've had to do training in is in the linguistic part. And that's only necessary because we need to know what, how the language is working. It's made it easier for me to run this program because I know what's expected not only from the people but also from Washington. And in the past I've had to work with - oh, Washington D.C. - people from there, and then I've had to work with people from the school district, I've had to work with the tribe, and then the parents. So that's 4 groups. And for each group you talk to them in a certain way. Now non-Indian people, people from the district, they don't really understand the Ute culture and the Ute language. And so you have to explain to them and they also don't understand linguistics, so you have to explain to them what's going on and what you're doing and why. You know the Ute people don't understand what's happening in the school district or in Washington D.C. So you have to explain all of that, what's going on and. Then the parents don't understand about the program or else what's going on in the district or what's going on in the tribe so you explain to them also and what their participation should be and you're dealing with all of these people.

Gruenwald: You almost become a middleman between all the people that need to talk to each other, the communication center.

Taveapont: Yes, there is that need and if you don't have that then you are just merely providing services and you're not giving out any kind of information or you're not getting any input from anybody else, so it's just not really everybody's program, it's just your program and the government or whoever. But if you really want to make it succeed then it should be everybody's program not just the people that sponsored it or whatever.

Gruenwald: How is the communication going between the education division and the parents on the reservation? Any better than the government?

Taveapont: Well, I think each program is--it's up to each program to do that, not the division as a whole. Now speaking from my program, we've been in contact with the parents all year and prior to this and we send home things with the students almost every month or when something is coming up we send things home. But the parents are just, I think it has to come from the top and say "well, this is what's happening. You should get educated. You people have to do this." I think that's what they need to hear.

Gruenwald: They're not going to do it themselves.

Taveapont: I don't think so because when you look at society, when you look at the needs first, like food and shelter, whatever, education takes the second position in their lives because they're taking care of their needs first. They need money to buy food, they need money for shelter and that's what they're looking at now. And so education is taking second priority for them.

Gruenwald: What's interesting about that is that seems like a very European idea that it's going to have to start at the top and go down. I mean, it seems like something more from the dominant culture. Do you think that's from the Indian culture or do you think that you're integrating things?

Taveapont: No, I think--you know, the idea of the head of the group--he's the one that's going make the decision and the rest of the group follows. That's the way I think of it. Working in a school district, if I wanted something done, if I wanted the support of the teachers, then I had to go to the superintendent and say "look, this is what we're doing, this is what I'm planning and I'd like you to support this." And how he's going to support it is he's going to write a memo to the principal, or even the principal is going to go with me to meet with the superintendent and then that's how I've gotten things done and I think--

Gruenwald: That's the only way to get something done.

Taveapont: Yes, and then I think maybe this, it would work for these people too because they should listen to them because they are the leaders and they should be the ones with the knowledge to make--with the power to make the decisions. In the past that's how it's been done too.

They say, "O.K., this is when we're going to go hunting. This is where we're going to go hunting" and I think, I'm looking at it as the same.

Gruenwald: I though it used to be more by consensus.

Taveapont: Well, he wouldn't be the leader if the people didn't agree on him being the leader.

Gruenwald: How about the communication between the education division and the school district? I mean has that been a good relationship? Does the school district listen to you or not listen to you? Is it more they have problems with the money than anything else?

Taveapont: I think they are now. And before, I think, they just didn't. And of course administration has changed too, in this district.

Gruenwald: Do you think that has been the turning point of them listening?

Taveapont: This new person, I think, is listening because he has been more associated with us than the old superintendent was. And I've worked with Grant during our time in the district. He's a lot more understanding and open to new ideas than the former superintendent was but he's been in the district for a number of years.

Gruenwald: Yes, I was talking to him yesterday. He said he started out teaching out in the boonies out here and he's just gone from job to job in the district so he's had a lot of experience. O.K. I guess that's all I'm going to ask.

Appendix E

Gloria Thompson - Interview*

By Kim Gruenwald

April 14, 1988

Gruenwald: Why don't you tell me something about the Ute teacher training program that you went through.

Thompson: Well, I'd like to start before that. I've been educated in the local area. I went to almost all of the schools. I started in La point and then there was another school, and Todd and finally up to Alteria Junior High and then West Junior High was built and we were the first year in the new building. And then I Went to the Union and then I had an opportunity in my junior year to go to Stewart Indian school in Nevada. And as I've lived through this so called "education" or "enlightenment" I've had many experiences and many have been negative and a lot have been positive. And in my--in the years that I attended Todd it was like if we were not to be heard. You had to be quiet, you had to sit still. It was very formal and if you crossed the teacher you'd get your hair pulled, yanked around, or I've seen a janitor kick some students around--so there were harsh punishments in this public school. And so I grew up with those and also the feeling that I really wasn't a part of the educational system. We had books in our classroom that called the Indians savages and red men and this was very difficult for me because I would say "well, I'm an Indian so therefore I must be a savage or, you know, a red man" and all of these negative things. And I never really felt part of the formal education. I always felt like there were things that were negative about who I was and I never really felt a part of it until my later years when I got out of High school. Then that's when I really began to form some things about what education should be. And I stayed out of school because I really feel apart of it for so long and I stayed out of school for about 8 years before I went back to college. And at that time the teacher training program was developed and, well, before that back in the late 60s we had a committee that was compromised of the two school district administrators, tribal people, and non-tribal people. And there were about 30 to 50 of us that got together and said "What is wrong with our educational system?!" And this was called the Uintah Basin Education Council at that time and I was part of that and we began to fight the things that set us apart from the rest of the kids at school, set us apart at as Indians and made us feel like we weren't worth anything. So we went through all of that (unknown words) and out of that we--the school district--wrote up a grant and in that grant they hired a coordinator. And this coordinator was to find programs that would be positive for the Indian children in Duschesne and Uintah and so at that time it was Ron Eagan? and he's the one that put in the proposal for the teacher training program and it was funded. And as we were going through the teacher training program we were able to be teacher's aids for half a day and the other half we took classes out at Brigham Young University and with experience that we had as children and with the experience that we were gaining being a teacher's assistant and also we were able to do the practicum and also we were able to gain the theories and the education that would help us be teachers. And I feel that those of us that went through this program were very well, Highly developed teachers in that we had experience and now we were going to be able to teach. And I think that it's really added to us because we knew how it felt to be rejected and to be on the outside looking in. And so when we became teachers then we were more in tune with the children and how they were feeling and we were more sensitive and we were able to provide a better program--programs that bring kids together and set the mood of the classroom because if the teacher is setting apart people or accepting some people and not accepting others that is the mood of the classroom. So having all these experiences we are better able to be in tune and make the kids feel good and that learning is fun so this is what we've done. I've experienced it so far and it's part of our lives.

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*The cassette tape of this interview is in the possession of the interviewer.

Gruenwald: How many other teachers that have gone through this program are teaching in the basin right now?

Thompson: We have name,name I think there's just three of us at this point.

Gruenwald: Were there more going through the program? Was three a small percent?

Thompson: There were ten of us and 5 of us graduated and 1 of our other people, Maxine Reed, is working as a bilingual literacy program ? and she's involved in teaching adults as well as children and one of our members passes away eventually? and another person living in Reed is involved in adult education program with the tribe.

Gruenwald: Is this still going on? The Ute teacher training or is that...

Thompson: The Ute teacher training was something very unique and it was really intensified and we were a unit, we were unified and we were going through a program, we were a tight-knit family and since then they have tried a teacher training program. It hasn't been as successful as before.

Gruenwald: Why not?

Thompson: I think that it could be the direction that they were given. Maybe the students weren't as committed as we were. It was just that--there were many of us that were brought together and we were strong individual and we had strong opinions and strong feelings and it kind of kept us together. The teacher training that followed behind us really weren't that intense. And another thing, we probably were funded for it. And as far as I know there really hasn't been a teacher training program as intense as the one we were going through.

Gruenwald: How have you seen the Ute tribe's attitude toward Ute education change since you were in the school system? I mean how does the tribe as a whole kind of view what they can do about education? Has that changed?

Thompson: I think the tribe more than ever is aware that education is the way to go. And I have to say like the state of Utah, I mean there's a lot of children, but there's so many x amount of dollars and they just don't have the funds and I would say that the Ute tribe is in that situation now where a lot of the tribal members say "you talk about education now put your money where its at." I don't really se that happening but there still are programs like the JOM program that's still in the school now. The tribe is waking up a realizing "hey, we've got to have education and also knowing yourself is important too" and so they're looking at it as a heritage and a culture very important to us and education is also important to us. We can't do one without the other.

Gruenwald: Why do you, I asked Mrs. Denver this earlier, why do you think the kids get these special programs here at West and Todd and then they go on to Union High school and they drop out. Why does that happen?

Thompson: Well, I have my theory. Our Ute children will either succeed or they have already dropped out by the end of 3rd grade. If they do not have their skills developed by the end of third grade then all they do is get behind and by the time they get to high school there is really no hope.

Gruenwald: They're behind in the basic skills?

Thompson: Yes. And that's at the end of the third grade and so I really believe that and I not only believe it but I've done a little bit of research on that and it seems to prove out.

Gruenwald: So you think it's more not having the skills to compete at the high school level when they get there.

Thompson: Yes. I think so more than anything else.

Gruenwald: What years were you in the public school district? When were you going to school?

Thompson: I was in--I spent 1955 to 1958.

Gruenwald: So you came in right when they just, right after they closed the boarding school.

Thompson: Yes, I did not have an opportunity, which you know I've heard some mighty scary stories. You know I'm glad I wasn't part of that.

Gruenwald: What kind of progression did you see from 55 to 58? Where things changing during that period? Where they kind of static until Title one or what do you think went on while you were in school?

Thompson: Well, when I was going to school the only time that I ever saw my mother com into this school building during all the years that I went to any of these schools, there was only one time she came to school. And she came because she had mislaid something and she needed to know if I knew about it. That was the extent and that was the only time. And I have some other theories pertaining to the boarding school. The boarding school was by far the most harsh experience I believe that my people experienced. And there was a lot of abuse. More abuse than in the public schools because they had direct contact with their lives day and night. And so time went on. These children were taken to the boarding schools leaving the parents without responsibility to the child because the government was doing all the parenting. So when the children were given back to the parents to be in their home and to attend the public schools I can imagine what went through the parent's mind and the things that took place. They suddenly found themselves as a family again and the older children would get breakfast and clothe the younger children and the parents for so long had not really had any responsibility that it was the older children that started parenting and taking over. And a lot of the children went to the grandparents also and the grandparents were doing the parenting and taking care of them. And as far as education went that was the last thing--education was not really that important because it was just--education to them meant their children went to a boarding school and they were relieved of their responsibilities, then when they finally came home, it, I don't know what they thought. And so us children that attended the public schools never really had parental contact within the school. There was no community, no communication. And so when we became parents then that's when a change took place because we knew how it felt to be without a parent through our school years and so when we became parents and then we wanted to be involved with their education. We didn't want the teacher to take the attitude that "the parents aren't here and they don't care then I can do what I want with this child." We wanted a say-so in their education. I think--I know that is the turning point because those of us that had been through it now were parents and we wanted to be involved. And the parents that I see coming into this school for parent-teacher conferences are my peers that are coming in. And they're asking and they're more involved and they want their children to learn which doesn't mean the parents before didn't want their children educated. It's just that they let their education alone. They left it up to the school. They wanted--it was just like "it's their job. Let them handle it." But at home they would encourage the child to go to school and make the most of it but they never came to school. But now we have parents that are coming. And also, boarding school, this is my pet peeve, before boarding school I listened to my father talking. There really was no child abuse. There was no sexual child molestation. There were no wide open drunks that would stagger around. And I would have to say that the boarding school lost our language and it abused our children and now some of them are abusers. And it made them feel like they were good for nothing. And so, therefore, we symptoms sure enough, all these symptoms--alcohol, drugs and things like that but I really feel like they raped the people and I always say we need to value education because we gave up our language in order to have our education and that we should value it because we lost our language in the process.

Gruenwald: Well now, you say that a lot of your peers are more interested in speaking up about their children and stuff but what about all of them that dropped out of high school? I mean there's so many in the past. Had they graduated do you think some of these non-high school graduates are encouraging their kids or do you think those are the quiet ones?

Thompson: I think that definitely they are encouraging their children because what they're saying is "look at me. I am not able to provide. I'm not able to do the things that I could if I had a better education. I think those are really--I would say across the board all the parents want their children to succeed and get that education.

Gruenwald: O.K. How do they feel about the Ute History class? Do they like it? How do they feel about the Title 4 and Title 7 program? Have they been very involved. Do they really support this.

Thompson: Well, I think that these programs have really helped our children and it has to coincide with who's running the program. My friends--that's Norma and ? --they started out at the elementary level teaching the language and that and the cultural things. And at first I know that there must have been much opposition. Just that there was much opposition when us Indians came to school as teacher trainees and aids. There was a kind of a big uproar. But we went in and we did the job and our people were kind of negative, but in the end I think they could see throughout the years what has taken place. And today there's not the big negativeness that there was in the beginning. I think now they are more accepting of these programs because the children are deriving benefits from them.

Gruenwald: Allright, I can't think of any more questions to ask. Is there anything you want to add?

Thompson: Just that I taught in the schools, I've taught 1st, 4th, 5th and 6th and now I'm over here in Jr. high and our Indian children are not dumb. They have intelligence and especially these kids that are coming through now. They have things at their grasp. They have television, satellites and they're just fabulous. They are learning things that I would never have dreamed of learning in their age grade. And these kids, they still need to know who they are--they feel--need to be proud of who they are. And without that we will continue to have drop outs. They need to get that feeling that "hey, I can do it." and try it. And those of us that have gone through the teacher training, the averages and the grades that I've seen????

Gruenwald: When you taught elementary did you teach all the subjects?

Thompson: Yes, I taught all the subjects.

Gruenwald: And then what did you teach here at the Jr. high?

Thompson: I teach, I help with the reading, and math and I do teach a self-image youth culture class and Tuesdays and Thursdays and I just can't say enough about how it has to go hand in hand. The culture and eduction without both--the kids perform up to a point but when he gets into Jr. high he starts asking "who am I?" "Where did I come from?" And he starts to have these feelings and hopefully we can have programs in school that will actually make him feel comfortable again and make him proud of himself. And Norma did a fabulous job with that.

Gruenwald: Why aren't they getting the skills before third grade? Environment? The school itself? Why aren't they getting the skills?

Thompson: Well, I would say the schools overload in the classrooms. I would say that even though they are not Ute speakers than most, I would say 99% are not Ute speakers. Some hear it but don't speak it. But still they are thinking in the Ute way. They still have that because their parents are speakers and they think in the unique Ute way.

Gruenwald: Does that keep them from learning the skills?

Thompson: No, I don't think that keeps them from learning the skills but in a way it does because we think differently.

Gruenwald: In what way specifically?

Thompson: I would say in our language. Like for instance the english we think is backwards. They have the subject and the verb and then in the Ute we would have the verb and then the subject. So language is part of the problem.

Gruenwald: What about math skills?

Thompson: We have our Ute math skills also but again the children are not speaking the language and it can't be explained to them in the Ute way but it just seems like we have an ancient memory or a recording of things that, the way we think and the way we feel and the way things should be and so if this isn't taken into consideration then that's when we lose the child and also our children are very visual. They need to see it. It needs to be concrete and if it's abstract then the child is not going to learn.

Gruenwald: Kids aren't ready for abstract until Jr. high anyway. I mean any kid.

Thompson: Well, once you get into math that's pretty abstract. And then the behavioral problems develop because of the deficiency of skills and then there are some children that don't have any behavioral problems. They sit in the classroom and never participate and then they get passed on to the next grade and they still don't have their skills.

Appendix F

Transcript Release Forms

TRANSCRIPT RELEASE FORM

I Bob Chapoose give permission to Kim M. Gruenwald to publish a copy of the transcript made of an oral interview recorded April [illegible].

I have checked this transcript for accuracy, and it represents my opinions on Indian education in the Uinta Basin. Kim Gruenwald has copies of the cassette recordings of the interview in her possession. I understand that the transcript will be published an an appendix to Kim Gruenwald's thesis, and the thesis will be bound and housed at the library at Utah State University, Logan. Kim Gruenwald has my permission to directly and indirectly quote from this transcript in her thesis, with the understanding that what I have said is my opinion and does not necessarily reflect the opinion of the Ute tribe, the Ute Tribal Education Division, or the Uintah School District.

I place the following restrictions on Kim Gruenwald's right to reprint the transcript in her thesis and quote from it:

[redacted]

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I have checked this transcript for accuracy, and it represents my opinions on Indian education in the Uinta Basin. Kim Gruenwald has copies of the cassette recordings of the interview in her possession. I understand that the transcript will be published as an appendix to Kim Gruenwald's thesis, and the thesis will be bound and housed at the library at Utah State University, Logan. Kim Gruenwald has my permission to directly and indirectly quote from this transcript in her thesis, with the understanding that what I have said is my opinion and does not necessarily reflect the opinion of the Ute tribe, the Ute Tribal Education Division, or the Uintah School District.

I place the following restrictions on Kim Gruenwald's right to reprint the transcript in her thesis and quote from it:

Kim is required to insert the following statement into the transcript that includes my statements:

"The anti-Indian or negatitive influence on the Ute culture is being promoted by the Jesus Christ Church of Latter Day Saints, the Mormons. I believe there is a deliberate and systemmatic attempt to destroy the Ute culture on the part of the LDS leadership. I would like to make this statement absolutely clear at this time. The message to Ute children has been very clear "Join the church and you will be welcomed in our schools ~~and~~ ~~[illegible]~~ become a part of our community. If you remain outside our church, you will be treated accordingly!" "

Kim,

I know this position (above statement) may place some pressure upon you (USU being pre-dominantly an LDS College), but I strongly feel that the record must be kept straight. I wish to be clearly understood at this time.

7/30/88, Forrest S. Cuch

TRANSCRIPT RELEASE FORM

I Norma Denver, give permission to Kim M. Gruenwald to publish a copy of the transcript made of an oral interview recorded at Fort Duchesne was corrected by me on a type writer transcript,

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Best luck to you -

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Do not print last paragraph on page 12 + ends of page 13.

28, 1988

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